OLD WEST

Spring, 1965

OW
K

50¢

BADMEN • RANGE WARS • GOLD RUSH • INDIAN FIGHTS • GHOST TOWNS • FRONTIER LIFE • BURIED TREASURE

HERE IS THAT VALUABLE SECOND EDITION OF TRUE WEST . . . PLUS 63 PAGES OF NEW MATERIAL!

THE MAN WHO BROUGHT IT BACK!

CHARLES BOVEY Has Turned On The Lights In VIRGINIA CITY!

BOOK BONUS! FINAL HALF

Lost for forty years, **GOLD TRAILS** has never been available to the public in its entirety before!

•
J. FRANK DOBIE
•
CHARLES M. RUSSELL
•
FRED GIPSON
•
GLENN SHIRLEY
•
NELL MURBARGER
•
NORMAN B. WILTSEY

See INSIDE FRONT COVER

A. KINNEY GRIFIFTH'S

THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME . . . THE HUNTERS AND THE HUNTED

OLD WEST

A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

SPRING, 1965
VOL. 1, NO. 3

BOOK BONUS!

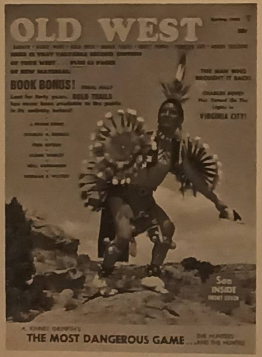
FINAL HALF **GOLD TRAILS of 1898** By WILLIAN DOBBIN . . . Pg. 60

Submitted by
MARY ANNETTE TUSSING

SPECIAL
NEW FEATURES by
- A. KINNEY GRIFFITH
- CHARLES W. HERBERT
- HATTIE E. JOHNSON

Also, In This Issue

LETTER RIP! 2
THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME . . . . . By *A. Kinney Griffith* 4
THE MAN WHO BROUGHT IT BACK . . . . . By *Charles W. Herbert* 10
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN . . . . . By *Hattie E. Johnson* 16
NOT THE WILL OF GOD . . . . . By *J. Frank Dobie* 22
BLIZZARD TRAIL . . . . . By *Jeff Morgan as told to Fred Gipson* 24
OUTLAW QUEEN . . . . . By *Glenn Shirley* 26
MY SON IS DEAD . . . . . By *J. O. Langford as told to Fred Gipson* 31
THE MAN WHO WAS BURIED STANDING UP . . . . . By *Bob & Jan Young* 32
LONGROPE'S LAST GUARD . . . . . By *Charles M. Russell* 34
GHOSTLY BELMONT . . . . . By *Nell Murbarger* 37
HELLACIOUS YOUNG HELLION . . . . . By *Jeff Adams* 38
OSTRICH STAMPEDE . . . . . By *Herb Wood* 41
GAUNTLET GLOVES . . . . . By *Harry Robb* 43
THE MYSTERIOUS JOHN RINGO . . . . . By *Nevada Dick* 45
WILD AND WOOLLY . . . . . By *Curt Bishop* 51
LEGEND OF THE LONGHORNS . . . . . By *Curtis Smith* 52
PERPETUAL MOTION CLOCK . . . . . By *Frieda Bryan Hyatt* 53
STEW FOR UNCLE MONTY . . . . . By *Ila H. Healy* 56
ON THIS DAY . . . . . By *W. C. Carter* 59



Cover: Western Ways
Features

Reproduced on
back cover for
framing

Publisher—JOE AUSTELL SMALL *Editor*—PAT WAGNER
Circulation—MARILYN SCHOLTZ *Secretary*—CATHIE WILSON

Editorial and Production

LESTER U. BEITZ
LIZ LAWLER
LINDA SANDERS
ELIZABETH SMALL
JOE A. SMALL, JR.
DOVIE JARES
ROBERT SMALL
BILL VANNATTA
EUGENE WHITE

OLD WEST is published quarterly by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC., P.O. Box 3668, 1012 Edgecliff, Austin, Texas 78704, 50c per copy. Application to mail at second-class postage is pending at Austin, Texas. Copyright 1964 by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC.

WIMMIN, WIMMIN, WIMMIN!

I NEVER KNEW so many wimmin read our magazines! Fact is, I never knew *that* many people read my corny editorials—especially the *long* ones. Being the sneaky coyote that I am, I wanted to find out whether *anybody* ever read them so I hid the contest for naming our letters department along toward the tail end of my editorial.

Well, we got in letters from all over the country and roughly 80% of them were from wimmin. Here we think we are a red-blooded, tough-as-curled-leather, real he-man's magazine and you little female darlings are just eating up this old true blood and thunder! Not that there is a thing wrong with it—we were just sort of surprised. Seriously, our general mail paints a much different picture—I think you gals just like to enter contests!

I never thought there could be so many names for a letters department! From the names we received, we could run a new one every issue for ten years and still have a few to go! We were having a pretty rough go trying to make up our feeble minds until Doris Clifton, 15 Central, Buffalo, Minnesota, came up with "Letter Rip!" By golly, could you think a hundred years and come up with a better name for a letters department for an Old West magazine? So Doris gets the $25.

Now the following is almost unbelievable. There were only two "Letter Rip!" suggestions in the stacks of letters—one came in one day and one the next. Doris Clifton's letter was postmarked October 2 and one from Lily Michael, 987 Bryan, Salt Lake City, Utah, was postmarked October 3!

By golly, Lily, even though it says so in the contest rules (in case of a "tie" the letter having the earliest postmark will win) we think just one cotton-pickin' day's difference is running Old Man Hard Luck after you a little too fast so we are going to give you a sort of consolation prize of $15. Lily's exact entry is "Lett'er Rip!"

Now there are some honorable mentions. George Hart, 140 Ritner Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, comes up with "Counting Coup!" Charles Bedford, Cuervo, New Mexico, submits "Chatter Box" written on a mail box showing a copy of OLD WEST in it. Mary Reynolds Wonsyld, Route 2, Box 232A, Hood River, Oregon, sent in "Pot'Latch." She writes "Pot'Latch is an historic, history-making word here in the Northwest. The Indians, when celebrating or discussing serious matters would call a Pot'Latch. Everyone who came was entertained by the chief of the tribe calling the meeting. This would be the case of our Pot'Latch in OLD WEST." Mary is a "step"-grand-niece of Clay Allison.

Mrs. Jayne Anderson, P. O. Box 885, Del Rio, Texas, (bless your heart, hon!) says that "Hosstail's Mailbox" ought to be a good one. It sounds more like old corny Joe all right, but my mail is just a part of what comes in these days. If our editor, Pat Wagner, didn't get the biggest portion of the mail these days I would have to head for the Wild Bunch!

"Pioneer Post" comes from Mr. and Mrs. Erving Evenson, Route 2, Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. "Gem Bag" is one among ten submitted by Robert L. Jones, 908 East Empire Street, Bloomington, Illinois. And from Fay W. Hulbert, 3806 Pleasure Way, Montrose, California, comes a similar one "Gab Bag." Frank Scheicle, R. R. 3, Box 46, Ellsworth, Wisconsin, submits "The Mochila" and "Old Westerners" among several others. We'd better cut off with "Pow-wow" from Mrs. Robert M. Milek, 836 Mondell Street, Thermopolis, Wyoming.

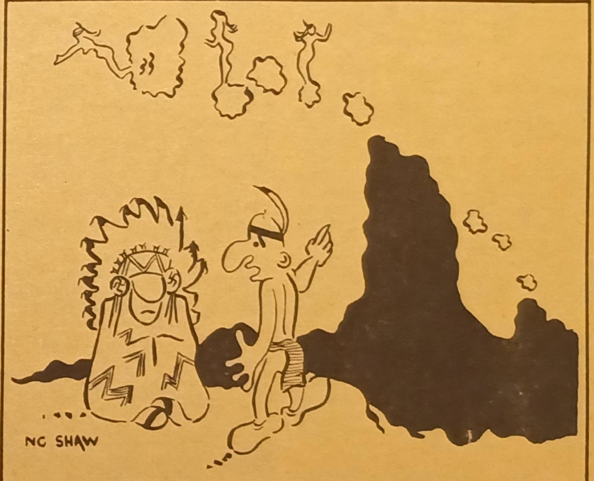
I wish we could mention some of the others but there were simply too many. If you think your entry should have won, you are probably right—I only wish we could use fifty names for our letters department! Incidentally, the honorable mentions are receiving a full year's subscription to OLD WEST. These contests are fun even though they do throw much extra work on us—maybe we can have some more soon.

I'm trying not to make this one long-winded! I'll give a brief report on how things are going and cut it off. I am sure you know I will tell you the truth about this magazine, as I did on TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES in the early days, and would welcome the chance to cry all over your shoulders but it looks like, blast it, I'm not going to get a chance!

We all had a feeling like a dozen earthworms crawling around in our stomachs when we started a hundred-page magazine without advertising and costing 50¢, but we decided we'd give it every ounce of gas we had relative to turning out the *very best* Western Americana magazine that has ever been published—and you guys tell us that we're doing it! Sometimes I think you folks are sort of sadists because your letters just make us hump over and try twice as hard to make the next issue better than the last.

Nobody has written a letter about reprinting the first issues of TRUE WEST hurting their collection in a long, long time. I believe they are now convinced that an original is not an original unless it is an original! (We all get tetched after a couple of years in this work!) Take a rare old book, selling for $100, reprint it and see what you get per copy! In our case, as explained, we are adding just about a whole new magazine under another title. This issue has only 33 pages of Number Two TRUE WEST, for instance, and 63 pages of new material. Eventually, all material will be new.

Now, if I am to stick with my promise, I'd better just shut up and fade away.—Joe



"Need'um new man for Lone Rock, Chief!"

LETTER RIP!

Dear Joe:

James R. Gray's account of the last Choctaw tribal execution in the Winter issue of OLD WEST was one in which the absolute truth prevailed. My father knew Silan Lewis, but did not see the execution. Silan was one who "bushed" those whom he was certain to meet on the dirt roads of that time. Robinson Murphy, a full blood Choctaw, was a neighbor of ours for many years and was a witness to the affair. He is in the photograph which was made immediately after Lewis was shot.

Choctaw tribal executions, like some other traditional practices of the tribe, have always remained outside any complete comprehension on the part of the white man who, in every instance, did his best and utterly failed in persuading condemned Indians to flee the wrath of his brother's law. It should be remembered that the tribe never harbored an infidel; that the ultimate of a Choctaw's existence was to die bravely without flinching even under the most cruel and painful recommendations of either a friend or foe. Any demonstration of cowardice, fear or weakness when the chips were down brought dishonor to the one about to die, and eternal shame to his relatives who would live. Our so-called civilized society may profit, in time, from the honored traditions of the Choctaw Indians whose laws were enforced and never enacted for the benefit of confirmed criminals.

Duels among the Choctaws were few and far between. Those things which might precipitate a duel had not nearly the value in a final showdown as the participant's willingness to die bravely, because that is what he had been challenged to do. An accepted challenge was the same as one given. The consequences of such mutual contracts terminated in certain death to both parties. Those about to die held no weapons. Each one selected a friend who was given a weapon of death. Each "friend" stood by the other's adversary, only a few feet apart, and at a given signal both "friends" fired with deliberate intent at their designated targets. Unsophisticated as it may seem, there has been little improvement in our methods today.

Thanks for the history you're making available for everyone.—J. Gorman Kelly, Bent Chimney Ranch, Wardville, Oklahoma.

An interesting letter, Gorman. I have some Indian blood in me but to stand hitched while somebody blows you apart from close up—I must have come from old Chief Running Feet's side of the family!—Joe

Dear Joe,

I should have written a long time ago but I just kept putting it off. Just got my Number 2 OLD WEST and, man, you are on the ball. I just read "The Other World of the Superstitions" by Bernice McGee and it really hit the spot. Somebody just mentions those mountains and the hair crawls up on my neck.

Been reading your magazines a long time. When they hit the newsstand here I have a standing order. ME FIRST! Don't worry if they cover them up. I dig them back out! As the man said, "You print it, I'll read it!" They are tops, Joe, and I mean it.

Go ahead and reprint the old copies. I would like to read them again. I didn't keep my copies but passed them on to the barber shop here and they in turn passed them on again. I don't know where they ended up, but if someone else collected them that would be a heck of a note. Keep up the good work.—Clint Scott, Scott's Taxidermy, Willards, Maryland.

Thanks, Clint! If you keep OLD WEST, you'll have a collection of two magazines in one. Actually, we're getting to where there is about one-third old and two-thirds new material. Pretty soon it will be *all* new. Since we are depending on newsstand sales almost wholly to keep going, thanks for "pulling 'em out!" It's a hard old row to hoe when you're covered up with sex and sensationalism!

Dear Sir:

Congratulations to you and your staff on a real story with good pictures in the Winter issue of OLD WEST—"The Other World of the Superstitions." I enjoyed it very, very much but all the stories are so good, it's hard to choose between them.

When are you going to publish a magazine containing all of the treasure stories, published under one cover, without any advertisements?

Again, thanks for a fine magazine.—Francis B. Marcum, 2726 Third Avenue East, Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

Been thinking about it, Francis. Got our hands so dad-blamed full now it makes me think of hog-killing time. It's on the "to do" list, however.

Gentlemen,

I read your very interesting article "Tales of the Branding Iron" in your Fall, 1964, issue of OLD WEST.

In it you mentioned the Santa Margarita Rancho near the San Luis Rey Mission in California whose cattle wore the TO brand. The Santa Margarita Rancho is now Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, California, whose brand is CP. Camp Pendelton covers about 126,000 acres and each year in June they put on the world's largest free rodeo using RCA stock with servicemen from Camp Pendleton as contestants.—Sgt. William J. Glendenning, MACS-3, Air-FMFPac, MCAF, Santa Ana, California.

Dadgum, William, times sure change, don't they? Bet them old TO boys would be right shook up if they could come back for a day and watch you boys bulldog a jet!

Dear Joe:

It pleases me to see that the new and wonderful OLD WEST is on the newsstands. The first edition was great, but I am more pleased with the new one as you printed a wonderful story of the old mining site of Nelson, in Clark County, Nevada. I've been there several times.

"A pair of Outlaws" and "Let 'er Rip Montana" were just too much. Montana is my home state. I was born and raised there. Montana is celebrating 100 years of territorial statehood and 75 years of statehood. Nevada is celebrating 100 years of statehood.

"Alaska Gold Trails of 1898" I'll read next. My grandfather, William H. Morehouse, died there in 1897. He was born and raised at Waco, Texas. If any of your Texas readers knew this man or any of his family, I'll be pleased to hear from them.

In my book you can do no wrong with your third magazine. I began collecting TRUE WEST at Killeen, Bell County, Texas, in 1953, and have a full set minus Number 1, and all of FRONTIER TIMES. Keep up the wonderful work that you're doing. The West is not dead by any means.

Please print this as I'd like to get word on my grandfather Morehouse.—Kevin Armstrong, 216 North 7th Street, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Bet you get it, Kevin. Don't believe we've lost a soul yet.

Pat Wagner:

I always read your OLD WEST and enjoy it. In one story, "Let 'er Rip Montana," does anyone know what became of Jim Breen or if he came from Ireland. I suppose he is dead by now. My husband had a brother Jim who came to the United States about that time and never could find him. I would appreciate any information about him. If it is the same line of Breens, he still has a brother living here who is ninety-one years old.

Thank you for any help you can give. —Mrs. Patrick Breen, 7040 Concord, Beaumont, Texas.

Dear People:

I received my copy of your new magazine and brother, I like it. My only comment after having read it from cover to cover is that some time in one of your magazines I would like to see a section, both articles and pictures, devoted to some of the once famous sites, or at least interesting sites, that are now gone.

I visit Texas once in awhile and sometimes I try to find out a few facts about Tascosa, old Mobeetie, early frontier forts, and similar "names" mentioned in your magazines. Passing through as a tourist doesn't give me much time to look around and, not being a professional researcher, I haven't the time nor funds to dig. So what I see is not what I really would like to see at all.

Unless a man has access to a complete file of your publications he only now and then chances upon an article or a picture of any given region and never has a handful at any given time. If I'm going to read about something, I'd like to read all there is to know about it.

Why not sound out your readers as to their feelings in this matter? Maybe somebody else would like to see a more comprehensive coverage of historical sites, personalities or events. Okay, I've said it so now I'll shut up.—Alwin N. Scism, Deweese, Nebraska.

We've done this before, Alwin—three articles on the "Silver" Tabors of Colorado in FRONTIER TIMES, etc.—but got about an even-steven vote. About half the readers want more subjects covered as thoroughly as possible in a short piece as compared to a few subjects really dog-haired. But we're always open to what you scallawags want so give a holler or eat the same cornbread for supper that was warmed over from dinner!—Hosstail

Dear Sir:

Thank you for making OLD WEST available to readers of Western Americana. For years I have enjoyed TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES and welcome this addition of OLD WEST.

For several years I have gathered material on the Texas Mounted Volunteers and their service during the Mexican War for the purpose of writing an account of their service. I would appreciate it very much if you would print this request for help from readers who may have diaries, letters, manuscripts or information of any type pertaining to a man who served as a Texas Volunteer during the Mexican War. These men were known to the army and civilians as Rangers and are said to have been the best troops in the American army. Information concerning the Rangers is not easily available and the most accurate source material is to be found in family records. I will gladly exchange data pertaining to a Ranger with anyone who has family papers but who does not have military records and assure your readers that all correspondence will receive my prompt attention.

The Rangers of the Mexican War helped make history with their courage and valor and it would seem a fitting tribute to compile all information of this type.—Bob Stephens, 3617 Granada Avenue, Dallas 5, Texas.

Dear Mr. Small:

Just received my first copy of OLD WEST and like it fine, especially "Big Foot Wallace." We live only a short distance from Big Foot, Texas, and the museum dedicated to him, and have helped arrange and label their small gun collection. Many people visit the Big Foot Wallace Museum.

I have a lot of copies of the original FRONTIER TIMES. nearly a complete file of TRUE WEST, a complete file of the new series of FRONTIER TIMES, and would like to get one on OLD WEST. These are to be bound and will make a fine addition to any library.

Some years ago while in Alpine, I visited their fine college museum and noted an exhibit that really interested me. Some thorough research should be done on it as I believe there is much material for a fine story there.

I refer to the exhibit in the West Texas Museum, Alpine, Texas, arranged by the late Judge Hays. He discovered the remains of a 40-wagon train that was evidently burned and its people massacred in a valley near Monahans. Texas. No authentic record exists of such a happening, although a wagon train passed through Yuma, Arizona, heading east in 1854. The remains of the wagons lay in a large V. Some of the items found by Judge Hays and on display in the museum are flintlock rifles, rifle barrels, breech and part of the action of a Sharps rifle, copper pots, a brass coffee pot, a Dutch oven, a wheel pulley for a dug well, cleavers, hub bands for wagon wheels, wagon pins, a wheel off a Wheeler & Wilson sewing machine, large iron pots, cow bells, etc. Only metal items surviving the fire that must have destroyed everything else were found.

One of your readers with a modern metal detector should have no trouble recovering many relics.—F. G. Carnes, Route 1, Box 16B, Pearsall, Texas.

Real interesting letter. Any of you gents know anything about this wagon train? Sure would like to have the complete story on it!

Dear Joe,

Just found Volume 1, Number 1, OLD WEST at the newsstand. Recognized the format, I thought, so I picked it up and sure enough it was published by TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. You pulled a sneaky not letting it be known that such had been conceived much less been born. I took the copy home, looked through it, and went back and bought the whole stack before some hoarder found them. Didn't want to get caught with only one copy as was the case with TRUE WEST. I did get the first issue of FRONTIER TIMES and put several newsstands out of business as far as Number 1 was concerned.

Since I have had time to read most of OLD WEST, I hope you will take my word that it is tops. A number of years ago, I became interested in history of the West and started a collection of Colts and Winchesters that helped make this country what it is today. Part of my collection of things that had to do with the Old West are your magazines. Someday, probably not too far in the future, we will know about these times only through people like you that have gathered and recorded events and happenings that set the stage for us.

I found nothing about subscription rates, etc. but certainly want my name on the roll when one is made.—C. T. Grable, 1170 Circle Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

It hurt us clear down to here but we finally decided we might last and started taking subscriptions. Long as you people pass the word, keep the stands clean, and send in subscriptions, we'll last—and try to get better with each issue.

Dear Pat:

I have finished the first issue of OLD WEST and find it delightful reading.

Kinney Griffith's "Haunted Corral" is certainly outstanding and is typical in its portrayal of the Aravaipa country. I know that country well.

"Big Foot Wallace" is a worthwhile book. The hardships he went through show the caliber of the men of those days, especially the Texas Rangers.

In the first issue of OLD WEST, readers are asked for their opinion of the magazine's future. My opinion is that this publication will one day be a source of research for writers of Western history. As the magazine is now, for those who wish to read the truth about the way things really happened in the Old West, I would challenge any other magazine I have read to come up to its fine standards.

I will close with sincere hopes that OLD WEST stays with us for all time.—Chief Nino Cochise, 2430 North Sparkman Boulevard, Tucson, Arizona.

By golly, Chief, we sure appreciate your letter. Looks funny us printing all the praise we do but we just haven't gotten many knocks recently. (Man, do I see some eyes light up with an evil glint over that statement!) We know we're not perfect and all praise sort of worries us but I just plain don't feel like crying over it right now.—Joe

Dear Sir:

I have just finished your magazine, OLD WEST, and I found it very interesting. I have always enjoyed the type of stories about the West that you print in your books.

I found "Big Foot Wallace" very interesting and had trouble putting it down to assume other duties. If it would be possible, I would like to see more stories about other famous heroes and gunfighters depicting their real nature and not what is put in comics and on television.

I will treasure this copy of OLD WEST and put it in a folder with the forthcoming issues that you publish. Some day I will take them out and read them all over again. I know I will be just as interested as if I had just picked it up at a newsstand. Please do not stop printing this magazine; I am sure that many people feel the way I do.—George Cordes, 2984 Pennview Avenue, Broomall, Pennsylvania.

Dear Editor Wagner:

I have just picked up the new publicaton OLD WEST. Congratulations! I am especially pleased that you ran the cover by Grandee also on the fourth cover. I wish you would do that with the covers of FRONTIER TIMES and TRUE WEST. I, for one, would like to collect these prints as art worth having. Or why don't you run them as separate prints and offer them to art collectors at a reasonable price?—Oscar Jacobson, 609 Chautauqua, Norman, Oklahoma.

It's pretty expensive but we'll try and work out something.—Ed.

Dear Sirs and Gals:

SURE, we like OLD WEST! We LOVE it! And we'd be as elated as an old pioneer catchin' the first drop of rain after a drought if you should be printin' of the old first issues of FRONTIER TIMES and TRUE WEST.

We have become so downright crazy over them fascinating rags, FRONTIER TIMES, TRUE WEST, and now this here OLD WEST, that we're considering suing you all for the alienation of our money pouch. But we're a-goin' to keep right on reading everything we kin git from Western Publications. Yes, sir!—Fran and Rudolph Trinkle, P. O. Box 989, Solvang, California.

Howdy, Joe!

Just stayed up all night to finish reading the new maverick, OLD WEST, out of your corral. Always thought TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES could never be beat but you did it this time.

It was a real pleasure to read about Big Foot Wallace without having to turn pages to find where it was continued. "The Haunted Corral" was good, too.

Now you are going to have to scratch gravel to keep coming up with stories like these. But you can do it as there are lots of untold stories of the OLD WEST that haven't been printed.

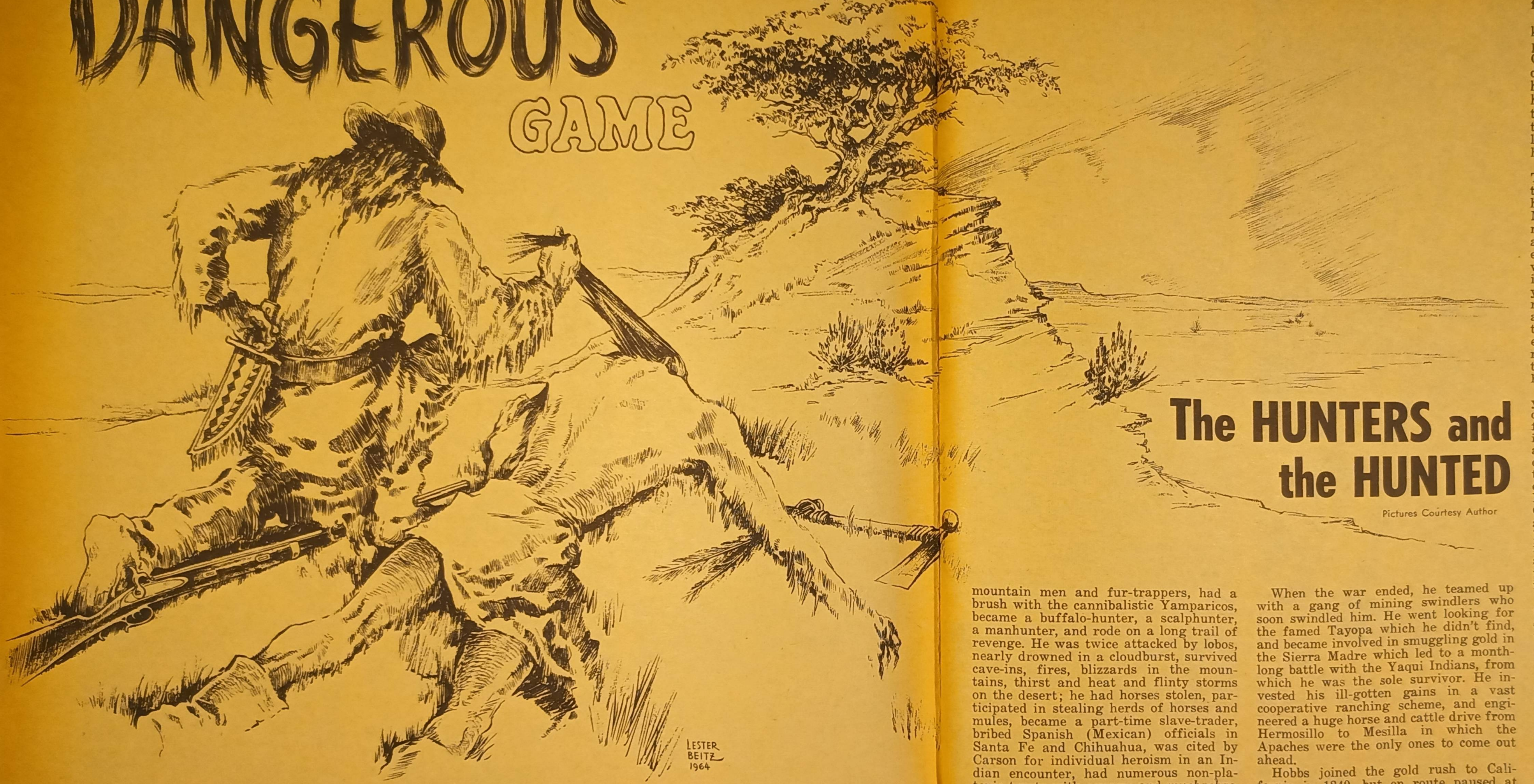
Several of us who work here at Lockheed Missile on space programs like to relax at lunch by reading of the Old West.—Perry G. Powers, P. O. Box 151, Sunnyvale, California.

THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME

The HUNTERS and the HUNTED

By A. KINNEY GRIFFITH

Illustrations by Lester U. Beitz



Pictures Courtesy Author

JAMES HOBBS was one of those indestructable mountain men—called "*monteros*" in the Southwest, or "*piel monteros,*" if they engaged in scalp hunting as so many did—around whom there seemed to be an endless swirl of action and adventure charged with an aura of good luck that permitted him to live to a ripe old age, have a town named for him, and write his memoirs with horrifying candor.

Hobbs was born in 1819 in the Shawnee Nation, part of which is now Jackson County, Missouri. At the age of sixteen he joined the company of ten Shawnee braves, led by a halfbreed Anglo-Shawnee hellion named Spiebuck (Buck With Sharp Horns). They were signed up as guards with Ceran St. Vrain's fur-trader's caravan in St. Louis and headed for Bent Brothers' Fort at the junction of the Purgatoire and the Big Arkansas. He didn't arrive there until the winter of 1839. On the way west he had been captured by a Comanche war party as the mule train was crossing the Cimarron.

In the intervening four years he had been adopted into the tribe when he showed fighting prowess; he went on countless raids with the tribe, held his own when enemy tribes raided them, and ranged from the midlands of Texas to the Rio Bravo, deep into Chihauhua and north to the Big Sandy Forks. He soon learned the Comanche language and became such a fluent speaker and wily trader that Chief Old Wolf made him the arbiter for their trading of loot with the villainous *Comancheros.*

Hobbs married the chief's daughter and deserted her when he saw his chance to escape. Half dead from lack of food and water on the Llano Estacado, he cut the trail of a mule train headed for Santa Fe. He sneaked into their camp that night and found himself confronted by the famous Kit Carson, and surrounded and reunited with his old friends, the band of Shawnees led by Spiebuck, who by now had become infamous along the frontier.

Making allowances for an aging memory and the fact that frontiersmen kept no diaries, by his own admission in the next eight years he enacted the drama of adventure from heroism to bestial savagery. With *carpe diem* aplomb he fought rifle and knife duels with other mountain men and fur-trappers, had a brush with the cannibalistic Yamparicos, became a buffalo-hunter, a scalphunter, a manhunter, and rode on a long trail of revenge. He was twice attacked by lobos, nearly drowned in a cloudburst, survived cave-ins, fires, blizzards in the mountains, thirst and heat and flinty storms on the desert; he had horses stolen, participated in stealing herds of horses and mules, became a part-time slave-trader, bribed Spanish (Mexican) officials in Santa Fe and Chihuahua, was cited by Carson for individual heroism in an Indian encounter, had numerous non-platonic trysts with squaws and *muchachas,* rescued an old lady, and several fair damsels in distress, clothed and otherwise.

WHEN the war with Mexico broke out in 1847, he served as a captain under Colonel Doniphan, became a spy and courier of secret messages, then a water poisoner, forager and raider for "squaw killer" Harney's dragoons. He rescued halfbreed children of white women who had been held in captivity by Indians, freed other hostages, helped rob a bank and seized gold and treasure belonging to Mexico, hobnobbed with the plethora of generals and politicians, arranged executions by hanging and firing squads, had one officer garrotted, masqueraded as a Texas Ranger, and traveled with the U.S. troops to Tampico, Vera Cruz and Mexico City.

When the war ended, he teamed up with a gang of mining swindlers who soon swindled him. He went looking for the famed Tayopa which he didn't find, and became involved in smuggling gold in the Sierra Madre which led to a month-long battle with the Yaqui Indians, from which he was the sole survivor. He invested his ill-gotten gains in a vast cooperative ranching scheme, and engineered a huge horse and cattle drive from Hermosillo to Mesilla in which the Apaches were the only ones to come out ahead.

Hobbs joined the gold rush to California in 1849, but en route paused at Yuma Crossing to rescue the Yuma Indians from the piratical John Glanton and "Doc" Lincoln and their gang of Texas renegades who had taken over the crossing. He fought on the side of the Indians and gained justice and revenge against the white pirates, then went into partnership with "Great Western" the most notorious woman on the Southwest frontier. He dallied then at Yuma Crossing for several months until conditions were stabilized.

He rode out alone to San Diego and up the coast to San Francisco, then inland to the gold country where he prospected some, but found better luck in mining stock promotions by which he made another fortune and lost it. Arrested for suspicion of claim-jumping, he broke jail and headed for the hills. There he survived a knife to claw encounter with a grizzly bear, bought a small rancho in the Napa Valley and had his folks move out from Missouri to farm the place. He then returned to the Territory of New Mexico in an effort to recoup his fortunes.

A certain longing obsessed him and he kept on traveling to the West Texas plains for a visit with his adopted Comanche tribe and the woman he had deserted. The young halfbreed son whom he found would have nothing to do with him. His wife turned out to be one of those noble women who went along with the theory "it is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all," and he departed, leaving her again with child.

Back to Bent's Fort, Taos, Santa Fe, Tucson, then Yuma again. In fact, down through the years, according to his book, he repeatedly crossed and criss-crossed Mexico and the Southwest territories so many times that he himself lost count of all his wanderings. He had friends and enemies among high officials as well as with the rough-and-ready element, was in high regard at some Indian *rancherias,* yet rode into several ambushes in the most unexpected places. He furnished arms for the American Crabbe Expedition *filibustero,* and rode a horse to death escaping the Mexican *Rurales.* He was made a major in the California Volunteers under Carleton, and barely escaped hanging on a charge of treason.

Encamped one night in Acomita Canyon, a stark naked girl appeared from out of the darkness, gasped that she was fleeing a band of Navajoes and collapsed into his arms. He fought the Indians to a stand-still, then rested for a few days, during which he ascertained that she was the *mestiza* daughter of a Mexican general who aspired to the Presidency of Mexico. He delivered her to the general in Coahuila; this put him in solid and he accompanied the revolutionary party to Mexico City, where he dabbled in local intrigue and spent his spare time playing and winning at monte and lottery, and was nearly stabbed when caught cheating.

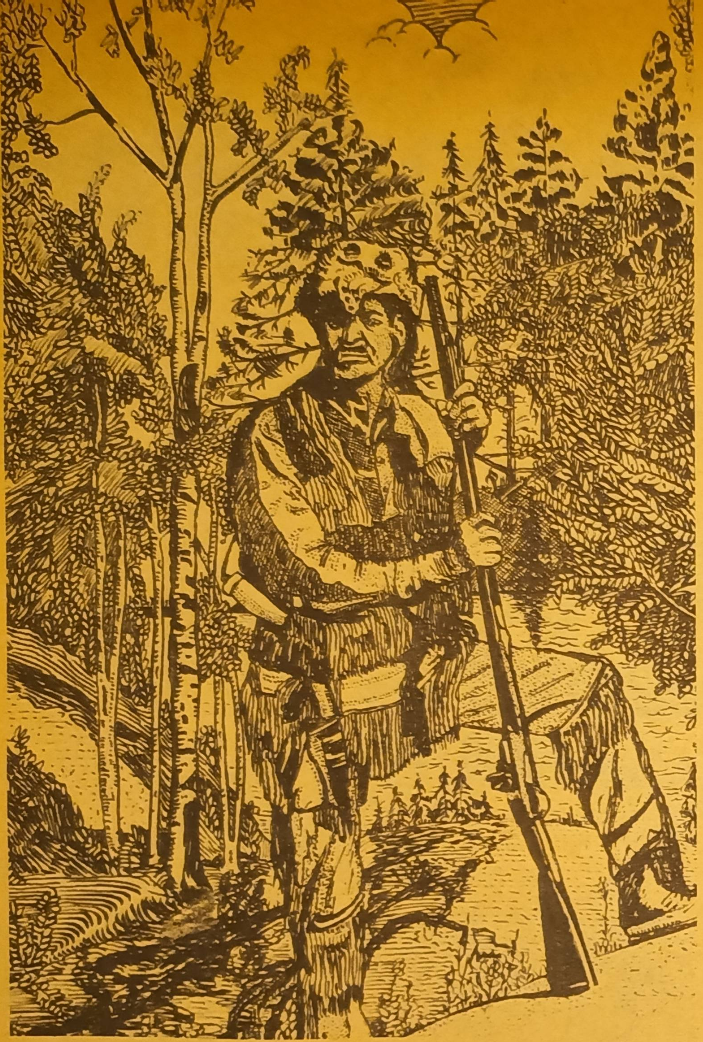
He kept his nose out of the American Civil War, but backed Maximilian's dream of empire all the way until things went sour, then denounced him when his plot with Juarez for the crown jewels failed.

"I tried my best to get Queen Carlotta's chest of jewels, but some greasers beat me to it," he wrote.

In fact, in his forty years of free-booting, his deeds of daring encompassed history as documented by Bancroft, and embraced the universal scope of plots, adventure and exaggerations dramatized by writers from Dumas to Bedford-Jones. They have since become standard situations and copied cliff-hangers with variations for contemporary authors of books and the Hollywood dream factory.

HIS ONE BIG hazardous enterprise, however, turned into a nightmare which plagued his conscience all the way to his grave. It had all started out in a commonplace manner back in the spring of 1842, but soon so many imponderables crept in that he lost all control—a predicament that is upsetting for a man who is used to having his own way. Heretofore, Lady Luck had shielded him from any serious trouble with the Apache Indians, a fact that he did not admit in his book. "There is not one particle of honor in the whole tribe," he stated.

He had known just enough about the Apaches to become very outspoken in his



Old print taken from a pen and ink sketch in Chihuahua and reputed to be of Jim Kirker himself.

denunciations of them and, following his first encounter with them when his lucky star really shone overtime, he came away with the firm conviction that they were the most repulsive in appearance, the most treacherous in action, the most cruel in deed of any human beings on the face of the earth. "The Apaches were a pestilence," he wrote, and throughout his long career as a *montero* he never changed his opinion of them.

Now he was riding solo, as he most always did, an advance scout for a heavily laden cart and wagontrain moving down the Rio Bravo Valley from Santa Fe to Chihuahua. The region was calm and peaceful and since he was at least twenty miles ahead of the *conducta* which was protected by an armed escort, he decided to camp for the night, or until the outfit caught up with him.

When he awoke, a full moon was shining and he had a sharp pain in his throat. He moved his gaze and realized it was the point of a lance held there by the leathery fists and arms of a bronze-red warrior. Moving his eyes he saw he was surrounded by twenty equally stalwart warriors. Apaches! That full moon was bright and amber red: The Apache Moon, the season for raiding at night. How could he have overlooked that? But wait! There was a bearded white man with them. He spoke in English, uttered the right words, and the lance point was withdrawn.

Hobbs sat up. The strange white man took a few steps closer; he had long brown hair and a brown beard and wore finely fringed brown buckskin garb from his *kabuns* to the eagle feather in his headband; it was hard to tell where the hair left off and the leather began.

"I'm Jim Kirker," the white man said.

"I'm Jim Hobbs."

So this was the infamous renegade, James Kirker, also known as *Don Querque*, a legendary figure who had sworn to kill all Indians on sight for what they had done to his parents back in the '20s. Yet here he was leading a band of Apache warriors!

Obviously there was something to the rumors that there was a white shaman in the Mimbreno Apache tribe, whose Warm Springs clan had reunited with the Copper Mine clan after the massacre at Santa Rita in 1837, during which Juan Jose, the tribal chieftain, had been so treacherously slain. Kirker and Hobbs got to talking and soon instinctively realized that they were brothers under the skin. They formed a pact of friendship that was destined to be tumultous and devilishly true to character—and ephemeral.

Among other things, Kirker explained, he had wormed his way into the Mimbrenos' good graces by bringing them medicines after the massacre, and by proving he had a ready market for all booty they could bring to him. In exchange, he would supply them with guns, ammunition, liquor, etc. Kirker also confided that *Mon-achie*—son of the late Juan Jose, and fast becoming a dreaded figure known as Mangas Coloradas—was at this time leading a band of picked warriors on a raid several hundred miles to the south in Sonora. Kirker also admitted that his present war party had been en route to intercept and ambush the *conducta* for which Hobbs was scouting. Hobbs glib-talked Kirker out of that notion by promising much bigger and better booty and got a promise of safe passage for his wagontrain.

The compact included that he and his Shawnees would soon join Kirker and his picked band of *piel monteros* on a rampage through the Indian Nations for a scalp-hunting sweep that would glean thousands of scalps. The government of Mexico was offering a bounty of fifty pesos apiece and up—*cinquenta a quinentos pesos oro*—depending on whether the scalp came from a young squaw or a famous chieftain such as Cochise, Mangas Coloradas, Cuchillo Negro, and Amarillo Colletto.

Hobbs then escorted the wagontrain on down to Chihuahua City and left it there. He returned with Spiebuck and his group of Shawnee fighters and eventually arrived at the mountain spring near Pinos Altos where they were to meet Kirker and his men. This was a *rancheria* of the Mimbrenos, who were cousins of the Chiricahui under Cochise. They found the *rancheria* virtually deserted except for about a hundred old ones and children too small to travel. Hobbs and Spiebuck waited three days and still no Kirker. Feeling betrayed, and that this was the end of the matter, they rode on northeast to Santa Fe.

HOBBS and the Shawnees immediately went into bivouac in the old "Bull Pen" which was the bull-fighting arena. Under the encircling grandstand were accommodations for the men, stalls for horses, feed and water, including spacious storage rooms. When his charges were all settled, he went prospecting for information and the chance to make a big deal no matter what it might be.

At the presidio he learned that the commandante had information received via "moccasin telegraph" that Mangas Coloradas had made a devastating raid in Sonora. Further inquiry revealed that Jim Kirker and his men had traded a herd of sheep and goats to the Navajoes for blankets, some fine horses to nearby rancheros, and much packable booty to the *Comancheros*.

Hobbs also learned that this operation had so incensed Governor Carasco of Sonora that a reward of five thousand pesos in gold was offered for the head of Kirker, and a like amount was offered by Governor Trios of Chihuahua. Both governors had previously offered a special bounty of five hundred pesos for the scalp of Mangas Coloradas. Here was a chance for an enterprising *lobo solo* such as Jim Hobbs to again make a fortune, if he handled it right.

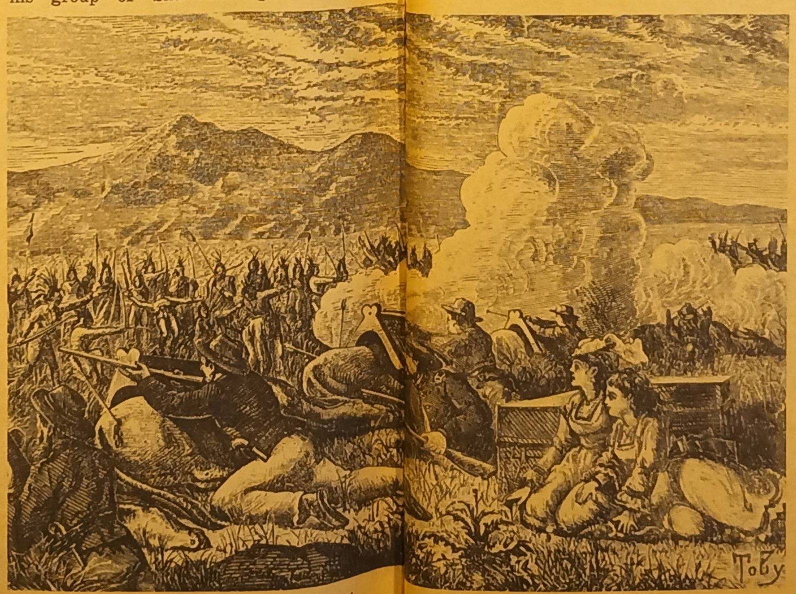
The opportunity came in the form of Don Saez Pores who was organizing a pack train to tote a rich order of valley-grown farm products to *El Presidio d'Santa Rita Del Cobre*, which had recently been re-activated after the massacre in 1837. From there the *conducta* was to transport a cargo of copper ingots to Guaymas by way of Chihuahua, and return with a shipment from Spain. Most of the long trip would be through Apacheria. Pores was in need of a reliable guide and a strong escort for this dangerous undertaking. Who could do this better than Hobbs and Spiebuck and their enlarged company of Shawnees? The deal was made with Don Pores and Hobbs returned to the Bull Pen to organize his company.

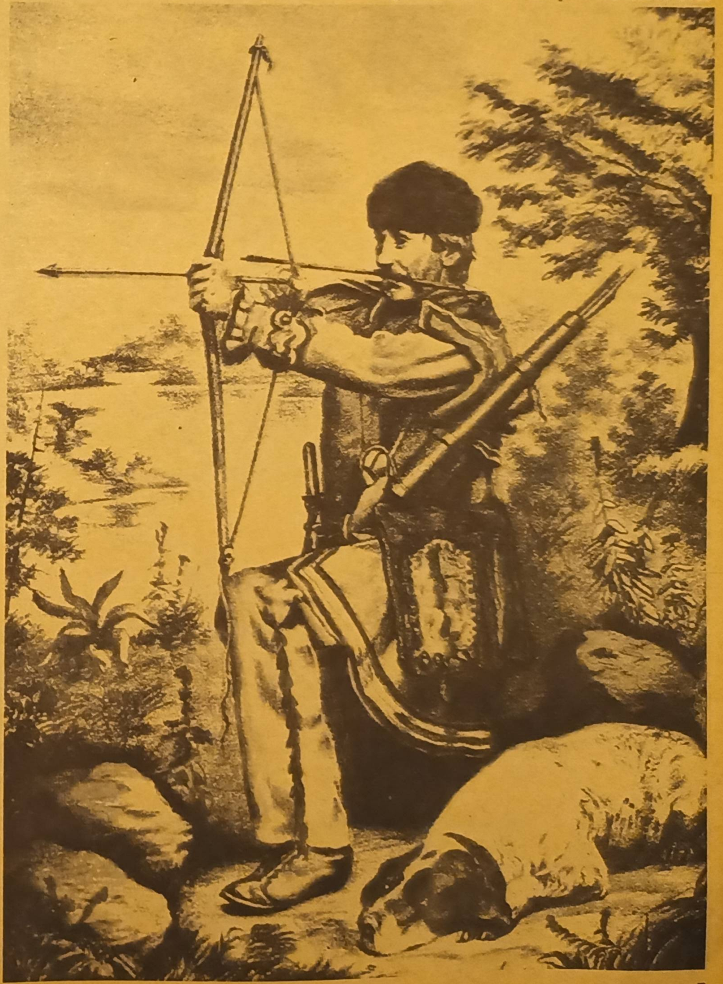
Within a week they were moving southwestward with ninety well-loaded pack mules and Pores' regular company of twenty men. Spiebuck was at the head of the Shawnees, now numbering about fifty; Hobbs was the leader of a like number of tough *monteros*, a band of whites and breeds who were capable of anything, all of whom regarded Hobbs as "heap big white chief" of the American colony in Santa Fe, since Kit Carson was absent on a trip to Bent's Fort.

HALFWAY across the Rio Bravo Valley they met a lone horseman riding toward them on a jaded horse. He turned out to be none other than Jim Kirker himself. There were few handshakes, but Kirker explained his failure to be at the tryst near Pinos Altos a month before. He had been called upon to handle the huge herd of livestock and other booty Mangas Coloradas had brought up from Sonora; further, he was now riding to Santa Fe to meet Hobbs and explain, and it was therefore most fortunate that they had met at the halfway point on the trail. His horse was played out and his men were lagging far behind. Soon all hands, stimulated by a cask of pulque, were united in a brotherhood with a common cause: they would fight the Apaches for the hell of it, and for common humanity, even if they were not paid a bounty for every scalp.

Kirker's band, numbering nine, turned out to be renegades from Tennessee and *Comancheros* from Texas, headed by a pair of old bushmasters called the Gray Brothers. The combined groups made up a coterie of over a hundred of the wildest appearing, the most vicious and fiendish in potential of all the *piel monteros* ever

Below, wood engraving shows James Hobbs and his pack train being attacked by Apaches (from his book "Wild Life in the Far West"). Old lithograph at right is James Hobbs in his Comanche tribal clothes, from frontispiece of the same book.





to invade Apacheria. Hobbs and Spiebuck were well pleased with the fierce potential, but the Shawnee, after sobering up, had a change of heart: he and his braves would stick to the original bargain —fifty pesos and up for every scalp his men would collect, along with all the booty his band could take on the expedition.

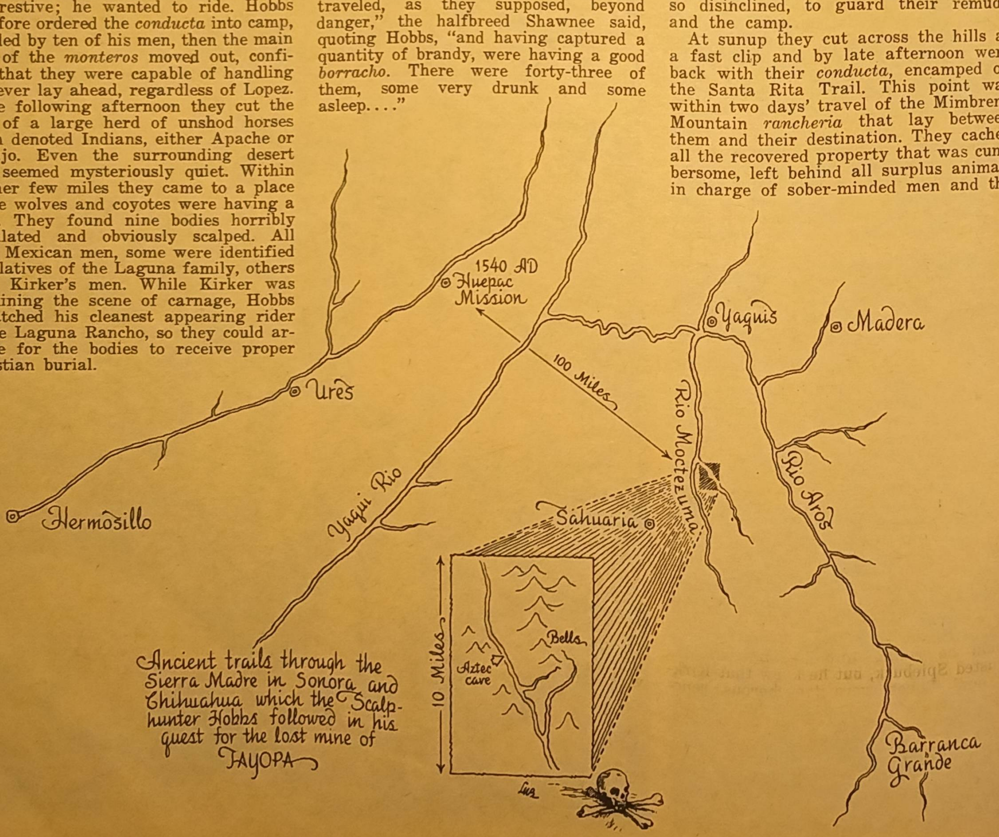
They made the sign of agreement on that, but Kirker was worried and said: "'Bout ten days back Ah done sent Lopez to th' Laguna Rancho with fo'ty loaded mules an' Ah ain't heered frum him. Yuh reckon we cud ease up thet-away fer a look see?"

Hobbs agreed. The Laguna Rancho, a large haciendada of a good family was about two days' ride to the north on the fringe of Navajoland where Apacheland left off. The overdue absence of Lopez suggested many possibilities. Hobbs had once met Rojo Lopez, an Apache-Mexican halfbreed with the reputation of being an expert guide and the most treacherous *cuchillero* ever spawned.

Hobbs realized that it was important to Kirker that he find out what had happened to his mule train, as well as to contact Lopez, for he would be a valuable addition to their force in its invasion of Apacheria. Lopez was a man, like Hobbs and Kirker, who instinctively lived by the theory that there were two classes of people in the world: the hunters and the hunted. Neither man belonged to the latter class.

Spiebuck, a manhunter under any known or unknown conditions, was getting restive; he wanted to ride. Hobbs therefore ordered the *conducta* into camp, guarded by ten of his men, then the main body of the *monteros* moved out, confident that they were capable of handling whatever lay ahead, regardless of Lopez.

The following afternoon they cut the trail of a large herd of unshod horses which denoted Indians, either Apache or Navajo. Even the surrounding desert hills seemed mysteriously quiet. Within another few miles they came to a place where wolves and coyotes were having a feast. They found nine bodies horribly multilated and obviously scalped. All were Mexican men, some were identified as relatives of the Laguna family, others were Kirker's men. While Kirker was examining the scene of carnage, Hobbs dispatched his cleanest appearing rider to the Laguna Rancho, so they could arrange for the bodies to receive proper Christian burial.



Ancient trails through the Sierra Madre in Sonora and Chihuahua which the Scalphunter Hobbs followed in his quest for the lost mine of TAYOPA

Spiebuck and his braves in the meanwhile took up the trail of the marauders. About an hour later the *monteros* followed. The trail wound up a wide dry wash in a northwesterly direction and appeared to have been covered by several hundred horses. They caught up with Spiebuck and his men hunkered down along a rocky hillside where they had found a dead mule. The carcass still had a packsaddle in place, loaded on one side with a sack of sugar. The other side had held a copper cask of Spanish brandy which the Shawnees were now drinking. The mule had been lanced in a dozen places and a broken lance was found which Kirker identified as of Navajo design. They removed the packsaddle and the sugar and loaded it on an extra mule in their remuda. That evening they reached the Indians' camping ground of the previous night, and found rice, coffee, and sugar scattered about.

The following morning they rode on and by mid-day had found five more mules, dead and abandoned with their packs still on their backs, as the fierce riding Navajoes had no means of saving such freight. The *monteros* secured the property by burying it, and pushed ahead on their own tiring mounts. The following day they came within sight of the raiders.

Spiebuck, who was riding in advance, bade them stop while he reconnoitered further to determine the strength of the Navajo force.

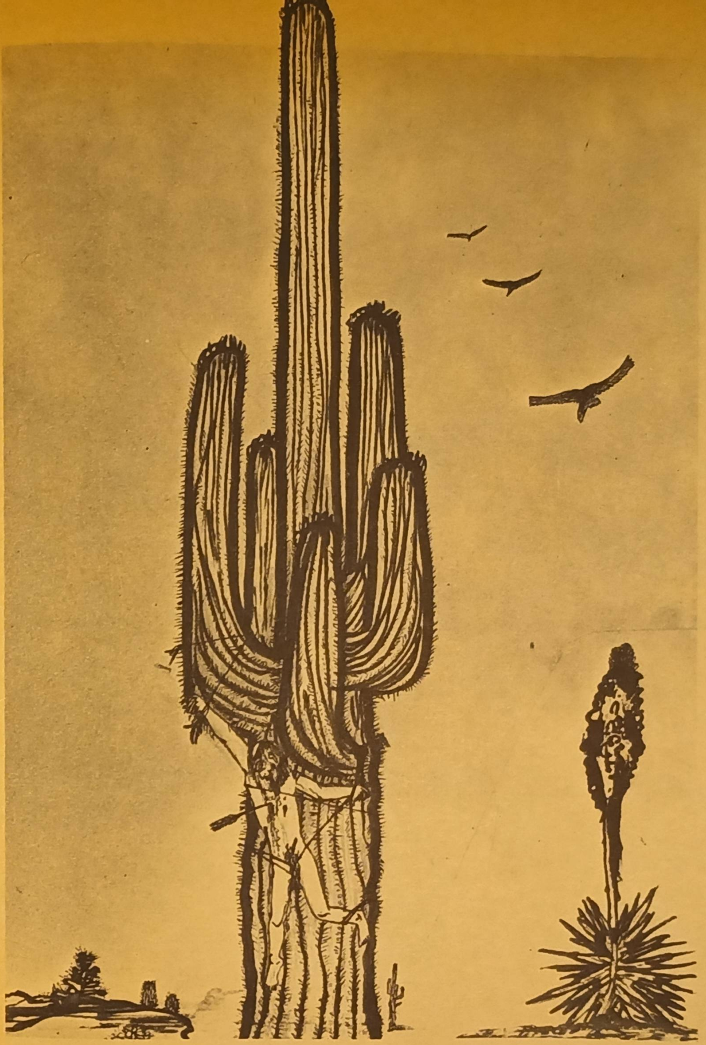
When he returned, he reported that the Indians were all drunk. "They had traveled, as they supposed, beyond danger," the halfbreed Shawnee said, quoting Hobbs, "and having captured a quantity of brandy, were having a good *borracho*. There were forty-three of them, some very drunk and some asleep. . . ."

At this point Kirker's halfbreed scout, Lopez, bloody and trailworn, suddenly appeared. He explained he had been captured and held prisoner by the Navajoes but had escaped when they were too drunk to notice. He confirmed what Spiebuck knew about the raiders. After some discussion the *monteros* concluded that the drunken Indians would be easy prey. They separated into two groups, so as to attack the camp from opposite sides, and reached the camp unnoticed. The Navajoes were so completely taken by surprise that but few shots were fired. Nearly all of them were slain with knives, tomahawks and war clubs.

"The Shawnees immediately scalped the whole war party, and Spiebuck, a hellish gleam in his black eyes, took charge of the bloody trophies," wrote Hobbs. "He proceeded to trim them and gave them a dressing of salt to preserve them, explaining that a Navajo scalp was the same as an Apache scalp when trimmed properly, and the governor would gladly pay the bounty without question. It was a pleasure to be on a raid with the enterprising Spiebuck."

All the mules were recovered and forty-three Navajo horses and mustangs were captured. They camped near a waterhole some distance away from the scene so they would not be bothered by scavenger wolves that night, ate what was left that was worth eating, and proceeded to sample the liquor booty. There were some choice wines and whiskey in some of the mule packs, and the group made an uproarious night of it, leaving the few, so disinclined, to guard their remuda and the camp.

At sunup they cut across the hills at a fast clip and by late afternoon were back with their *conducta*, encamped on the Santa Rita Trail. This point was within two days' travel of the Mimbreno Mountain *rancheria* that lay between them and their destination. They cached all the recovered property that was cumbersome, left behind all surplus animals in charge of sober-minded men and the *conducta's* regular guard, with instructions to follow at a normal pace.



Author's sketch depicting Apache cruelty.

With Hobbs leading 105 men, the hunters pushed on to destroy the Apache village and secure the scalps. Kirker and Lopez rode as scouts; Spiebuck as an out-rider. Unencumbered with the pack train, the hard-riding scalphunters neared the *rancheria the* following noon. Spiebuck staked a rendevous out of sight of the *rancheria*. When Lopez and Kirker joined them, they compared notes.

Judging from all reports, conditions for an attack were so favorable that even Hobbs began to wonder if possibly they could be riding into an ambush. He trusted Spiebuck, but he knew that Kirker and Lopez were treacherous renegades. After all, Lopez was an Apache-Mexican who had lived for years with this very same tribe; Kirker, a Mimbreno shaman, now had a bounty of ten thousand pesos offered by two Mexican governors hanging over his head, a fact that Hobbs wasn't likely to overlook. However, Hobbs had to play along with them, and Spiebuck concurred.

Hobbs saw that their bivouac in a wide dry wash was easy to defend and no one, not even an Apache, could get within shooting range without first being seen by the *monteros*. Leaving the main body of men resting and tending to the animals, Hobbs and Spiebuck paired up, and Kirker and Lopez paired up and the four then made one more reconnoiter on the *rancheria*.

BOTH SCOUTING parties returned by late afternoon. And both made about the same report. Kirker summed up: "Countin' wimmin an' nits an' ole bucks, thar be nigh a thou-san Injuns in thet wick, wit' only 'bout fifty bucks t' protect 'em."

The *monteros* were confident that the odds were in their favor. They counted off ten men to guard the camp and the others were formed into two groups and checked for battle readiness. Most of the *monteros* were armed with percussion cap rifles made in Pennsylvania, and Paterson Colt percussion cap revolvers Model 1836. The Shawnees carried an assortment of rifles and war clubs, or tomahawks. All carried scalping knives of the Green River and Bowie types, and were expert in handling them. They spread out, deployed in an encircling movement and approached the summit of the wooded hills that surrounded the *rancheria*.

"The view was splendid," Hobbs wrote in his memoirs. "The sun was setting. Their wickiups were thickly spread out in a pine grove close to a lovely lake (San Lucia) some six miles across. The surface of the water, so beautifully smooth resembled a mirror among the hills, and there was scarcely a sound to break the stillness that reigned throughout their camp. Presently, a little after sunset, we discovered a war party of seventy to eighty warriors approaching the village from the south . . . and as they rode around the edge of the lake, we saw that they had bulging packs and many loose horses. . . . Lopez guessed it was Cuchillo Negro returning from a raid in Chihuahua."

The leaders of the *monteros* held a conference and decided that if they waited until dawn they would still have the advantage. As the raiders had undoubtedly also captured liquor, they would have a war dance and celebration that night. The *monteros* therefore sent ten men back to their bivouac to bring up food and water and when this was done, they settled down to wait. After the moon went down, they stirred and reformed their two attacking parties.

The day was just breaking and Spiebuck, who had been looking down on the *rancheria* from a closer distance, came back and reported that there wasn't a warrior astir in the village and the only ones moving about were women making fires and preparing the morning meal.

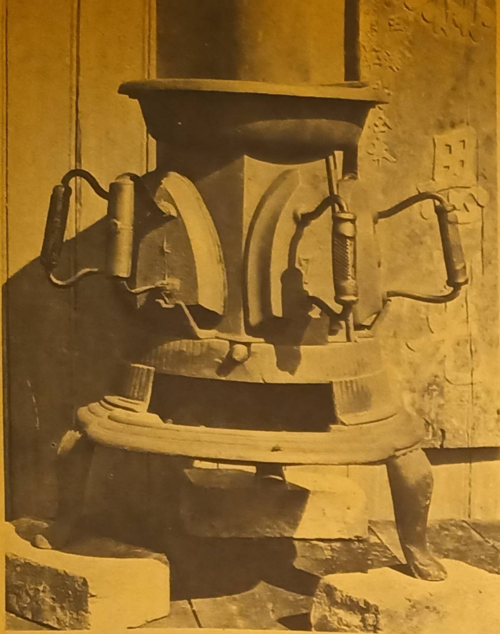
Kirker and Lopez immediately led off in a stealthy Indian-like advance and Hobbs and Spiebuck did likewise on their side. The smell of strange Indian became rank and Hobbs suddenly found himself almost within knife-wielding distance of a warrior and a squaw sleeping in close embrace under some bushes, when a shot banged out from the far side of the *rancheria*. There was an instant stir in the village, then a yell in the form of a curse from one of the white besiegers. The Apache Hobbs had surprised, sprang to his feet, with a knife appearing miraculously.

The half-naked squaw jumped up too, and although unarmed, she was moving like an aroused animal on all fours, and her swift movement took her directly at Hobbs. She hit him between his spraddled legs a split-second after he fired his long-rifle into the breast of the charging warrior; his knife fell harmless. Hobbs went backwards and down with the squaw's head clamped between his legs, her shoulders bucking at his knees. This ignominious position enraged him and he struck her on her rear with the butt of his empty rifle. She flung him off, scampered erect and headed for the hills.

Hobbs caught his balance and turned and fired his pistol at her fleeing back. She dropped and then struggled back on her feet and he fired again, thought he had missed, and fired again. She went down and stayed down. Later he discovered she had been hit thrice in the back; any shot would have been fatal.

There were shouts, curses and yells all around as he reloaded and advanced into the fray. Spiebuck, in the meanwhile, had crashed into a wickiup in which one

(Continued on page 54)



One of the prized items in the restoration project at Virginia City, Montana, is this stove and its rack for irons used in an early-day Chinese laundry. Chinese motto in background was also recovered and utilized in the display.

The MAN WHO Brought it Back

Virginia City is just like it was when Montana was young. And this time it will stay . . . .

By CHARLES W. HERBERT

Photos Courtesy Western Ways,
Tucson, Arizona

BACK IN the spring of 1863, Bill Fairweather and a group of prospectors, working in a region far away from their base at Bannack, were captured by a large Indian party. They were held in a canyon for two days while the Indians made medicine to decide their fate. The young bucks were for killing the trespassers while the old braves, fearing reprisals, were for letting them go.

Released, they headed for Bannack, prospecting along the way when they came upon tempting sites. On the spur of the moment, as they rode across the mouth of Alder Gulch, Bill dismounted and decided to try his luck. Like a seasoned prospector he searched for the ideal outcropping of bedrock. While his partner was panning out some likely dirt, Bill lifted up a chunk of loose rock under which he found a sizable nugget of free gold.

Fairweather's find touched off a rush to Alder Gulch rivaling the famed California stampede of '49. Prospectors, working in Bannack and other nearby fields, gave up their low-yield diggin's and swarmed in to stake out new claims. The Alder Gulch strike was in what proved to be the richest placer field in the world where, within two years, a horde of treasure seekers from all over the West took out over $35,000,000 worth of gold.

In no time the twelve-mile gulch bulged with diggin's and shacks until the overflow, along with camp followers, tradesmen, saloon keepers, gamblers, dancehall girls and badmen founded wild Virginia City in the nearby open country. It is estimated that over 10,000 people, including good miners, rushed in, building a thriving, wide-open town and setting the stage for the wildest, bloodiest era of frontier life.

Gold, liquor and fast living set the tune. With the law in the hands of Sheriff Henry Plummer, ruthless leader of a band of road agents, robbery and murder were as commonplace as sunrise. To these scoundrels a man's life had little value. They killed for gold and and to silence any witnesses against their crimes.

In its short-lived, riotous existence Virginia City buried over 200 murdered citizens. Scores of others disappeared never to return, no doubt meeting untimely deaths at the hands of the outlaws. Courts were crooked and justice was a farce, although law-abiding citizens outnumbered the lawless 330 to 1.

These sturdy honest pioneers, tired of the uncertainty of life, soon became a factor for the bandits to reckon with when they organized the famed Vigilantes simultaneously in Bannack and Virginia City.

In just about six weeks they tracked down, arrested, tried, convicted and strung up thirty-two miscreants, "on a stout limb of the law."

WITH PLUMMER and his gang wiped out, Virginia City settled down to a sober existence as miners worked and reworked their diggin's until the last flake was screened from the streams and ledges of the gulch. By 1868 the color played out and Virginia City, then capital of the territory, quickly became almost a ghost town along with Bannack.

In 1875 the capital was moved to Helena as Montana had become a state and new rich placer fields had been found nearby in what later became known as Last Chance Gulch.

Virginia City was left on a secondary road, passed up by traffic, neglected, deteriorating and forgotten except for its stormy history.

Then in 1946, almost as quickly as it started, there came a day of hope for its restoration as Charlie Bovey set his sights on it as his third project. When he finished, Virginia City was very much like it had been eighty years before and any self-respecting ghost could come back and feel pretty much at home.

Charlie was well qualified, since as long as he could remember, he'd had a collecting bee in his bonnet. But this was a real challenge. It took a lot of fixing up to put the town back into shape—what with many of the necessities scattered over much of Montana.

The Bovey family had been extremely successful in the flour business back in Minneapolis, but after graduating from Andover, Charlie passed up Yale for the chance to go West where he had a longing to be. He had learned the wheat business from the ground up in Great Falls, and had persuaded his father to let him lease a large farm and try out his theories. Quick to utilize advanced methods of dry land farming, success followed easily. Additional profitable ventures in sheep and cattle raising followed.

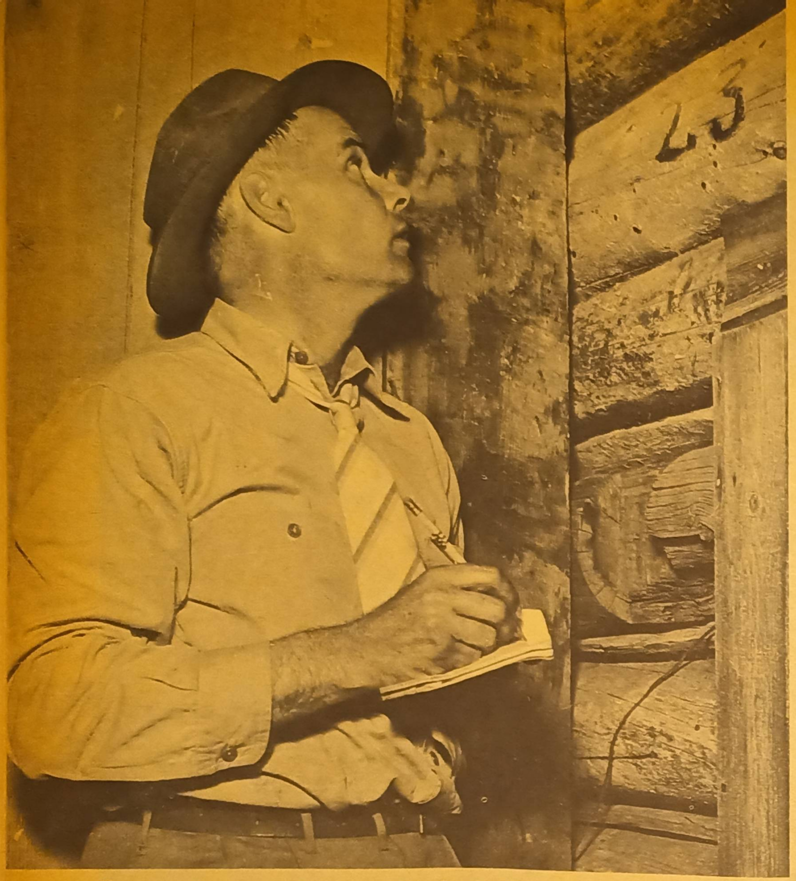
In his spare time Charlie served with the state legislature, traveled extensively and started a collection of antique autos, which he put back in shape and road-tested.

On explorations through sections where Montana history had been made, both he and his wife Sue were appalled at the way important landmarks were deteriorating and being chopped into firewood.

Then on a trip back East they visited Henry Ford's Greenfield Village, and then and there a spark was kindled into a burning desire and determination to save the remnants of Montana's past.

Back home the Boveys went on a buying spree unrivaled in the annals of the most ardent antique collectors. Going back to historic buildings he had located

Charles Bovey at work getting goods ready for setting up an old-time general store



The restoration expert checks one of the log buildings he bought for removal to his Virginia City project. Each log is numbered and a record made of its location prior to dismantling the structure. Then it is rebuilt on the new location with exact numerical precision.

on previous trips, Bovey negotiated and bought them outright—lock, stock and splinters. Right off, carpenters were set to work repairing roofs and sealing openings to prevent further deterioration and vandalism.

Word got around that he was some sort of a screwball. Sometimes he ran up against strong opposition when people preferred to hold on to their antiques purely for sentimental reasons; but, by then, he had the essentials pretty much nailed down and a plan well formulated.

Charlie was an active supporter of the annual Montana State Fair at Great Falls where his antique autos were put on display. The officials were looking for an attraction to fill up some of the dead space in one of the sheds. Charlie offered to set up his recently acquired real old-time saddle shop. Although it was miles away, he set about the job of moving it to the fair grounds. Painstakingly he key-marked every log, board, piece of hardware and article in the shop. Then the building was taken down, loaded on trucks in precise order of dismantling, and moved to the fair grounds where it was carefully set up again under a protecting roof.

All furnishings, material, tools and saddles were put back in place and additional appropriate pieces from other pioneer buildings he had bought were brought in to round out the display. To add to the realism, old-timers were engaged to dress in proper period clothes and work in the shop during the fair.

So popular was this exhibit that Charlie was given a free hand to move in his other buildings to form Old Town with its general store, barber shop, saloon, fire house, drug store, blacksmithy, Joe's Lunch, print shop and a real backhouse. All were complete in minute detail.

NO LONGER was Charlie eyed with skepticism; instead, he was widely recognized for his one-man drive to save some of the priceless relics of Montana's stormy past and pioneer days. Thousands saw Old Town and went away with keen understanding of life as it had been lived long ago.

Other influential and public spirited citizens came forth to commend him, and he formed the Historic Landmark Society of Montana, offering membership to all who were interested in preserving the state's historical structures and relics.

Unique in modern day promotion was the use of the antique Washington hand operated press to turn out the *Old Town Promoter* glorifying on one page the opportunity to join and work with the society. This sheet also carried three full pages of news items and advertisements just as they had appeared in various pioneer publications. There was an application blank in the *Promoter* for interested parties to fill in for membership with fees set at $3.00 annually or $50.00 for life.

With a feather firmly set in his cap and wide horizons of restoration possibilities stretching out before him, Bovey cast a searching eye toward a more challenging project.

"Why not a whole town?" he thought, "and what better one than Virginia City, early Territorial Capital steeped in rip-roaring history yet slowly rotting away?" So it was that Virginia City was chosen to be restored and right then another chapter in its fabulous history started.

There was almost a solid block of buildings in varying stages of decay at the foot of Wallace Street. Others were crowded with all kinds of discarded articles. None was occupied and the owners, still paying taxes but getting no income from the property, were willing to sell. And Charlie was in the market to buy.

He bought every one in the block himself and the Landmark Society bought the old *Montana Post* building across the street on the next block.

Right off, the old Hoe hand-operated press was put to work, turning out perfect sheets, using the original masthead and ancient hand-set type just like that used in Mark Twain's original shop over in Virginia City, Nevada. Once again the *Montana Post* hit the street, not to herald another gold strike or murder, but to promote the restoration and to help keep interest alive throughout the state.

MEANWHILE CHARLIE got busy taking stock of his newly acquired real estate. Most of the buildings were sorely in need of repairs. As before, the first step was to make the roof, doors, windows and walls watertight.

It was a big job but, once started, there was plenty of help from local townsfolk.

All of the articles found in the vacant buildings were assembled in one large room and classified for placement. Soon the assembly room took on the look of a Hollywood prop shop and Charlie could be found there many times a day reveling in his stock. Showcases, dolls, pitchforks, spinning wheels, high shoes, patent medicines, food bins, churns, talking machines, cut nails, tongs, sadirons, cotton cloth, corsets, straw hats, high hats, frock coats and hundreds of other articles filled up the floor space, crowded the shelves, and hung from the ceiling.

All of the empty buildings were then swept, cleaned, painted or papered to ready them for their final face lifting and stocking.

Charlie didn't know for sure where everything would go and he didn't know exactly how much he would need so he just kept right on collecting and adding to the huge pile of goods left over from Old Town and that collected in Virginia City. His passion for buying up anything which was around in Territorial days just grew and grew.

The press and civic organizations took up his cause, stirring up old-timers to search their attics, cellars, barns and sheds for anything that had a history. His work became easier and his trips more fruitful as more and more friendly doors were opened to him.

Bovey had a keen nose for the unusual and he tracked down many rare pieces important in putting Virginia City back together again. Each new find was a treasure to him and brought him great personal pleasure. While the discovery of a sadiron would bring a gleam to his eye, he would break out into a broad smile when he got his sights on a dozen bottles of patent medicine or a gross of buttons.

Soon he and Sue were forced to provide rooming and eating facilities for visitors already coming to see the work they were doing. They remembered the old Goodrich Hotel over in Bannack which they had tried unsuccessfully to buy the year before and they decided to try again. The Boveys got there just in time to see the whole front lying in the street and an old-timer breaking it up for firewood. A deal was made salvaging pillars, railings and enough gingerbread to use as patterns.

An old building used as a rooming house on the back of a lot in their Virginia City block served as an anchor for the planned hotel. Then an entirely new two-story front was erected out front and joined on to the old one. The exterior plan was a close copy of the old Goodrich Hotel.

Period furniture, wallpaper, carpets, drapes, fixtures, pictures and knickknacks pulled out of the restoration prop room completed the lobby in true mining-day style. Upstairs on either side of a narrow hall a series of bedrooms were furnished with old-time beds, bureaus, chairs and washstands, including a china wash basin, pitcher and slop jar. Up-to-date mattresses and springs took the place of feather bedding, however. Running-water bathrooms were provided for the comfort of tenderfoot guests. Complete with ground floor and upper story porches lined with comfortable rockers, the hotel (named Fairweather Inn) was ready for business.

About this same time, Sue was busy supervising the renovating of a building on the site of the old Wells, Fargo Express building into an efficient dining room. Nearly overnight Virginia City, of an almost forgotten era, came to life again to be preserved for posterity.

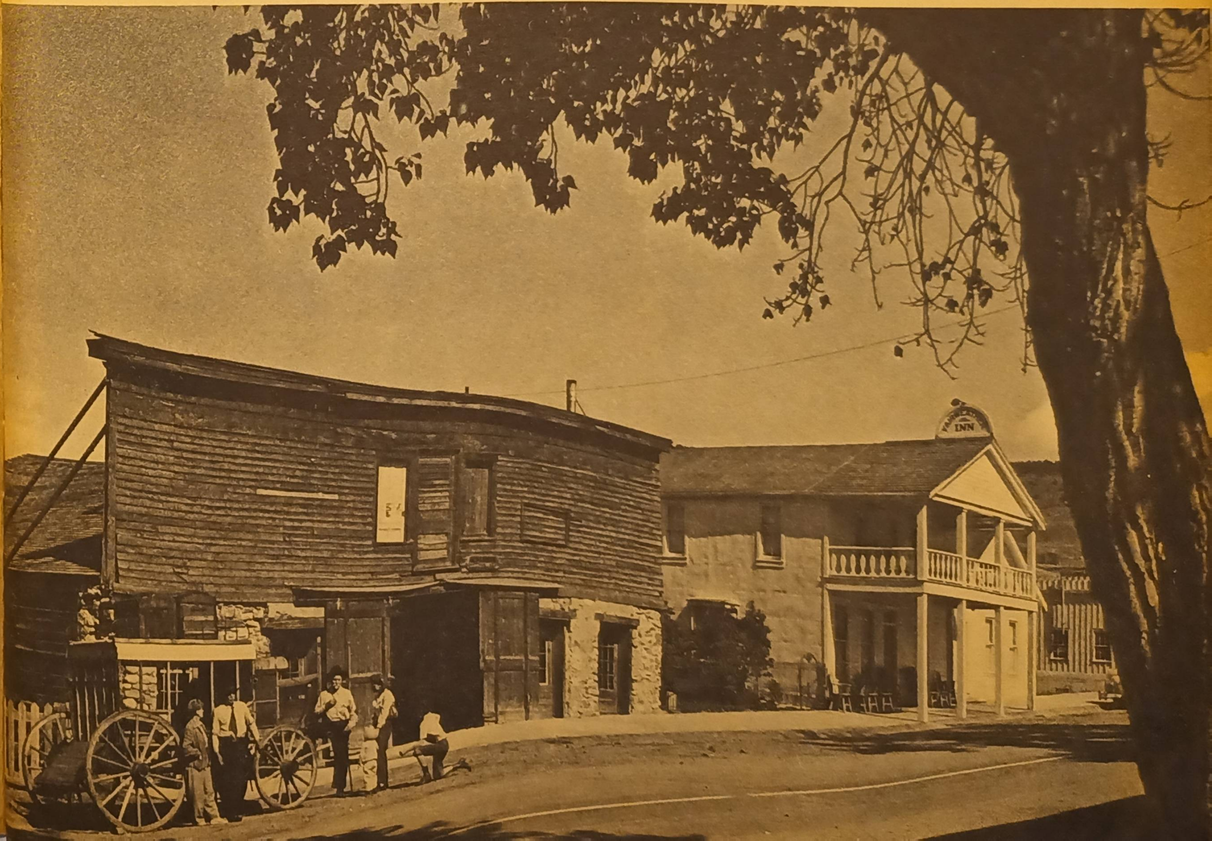
CHARLIE INSISTED on meticulous historical accuracy. The few old-timers who were still holding on to life and hope in Virginia City came forth to help set up the stores and establishments just as they remembered them. Charlie relied heavily on their suggestions and ideas, giving them full credit for their valuable service, and many were put on the payroll.

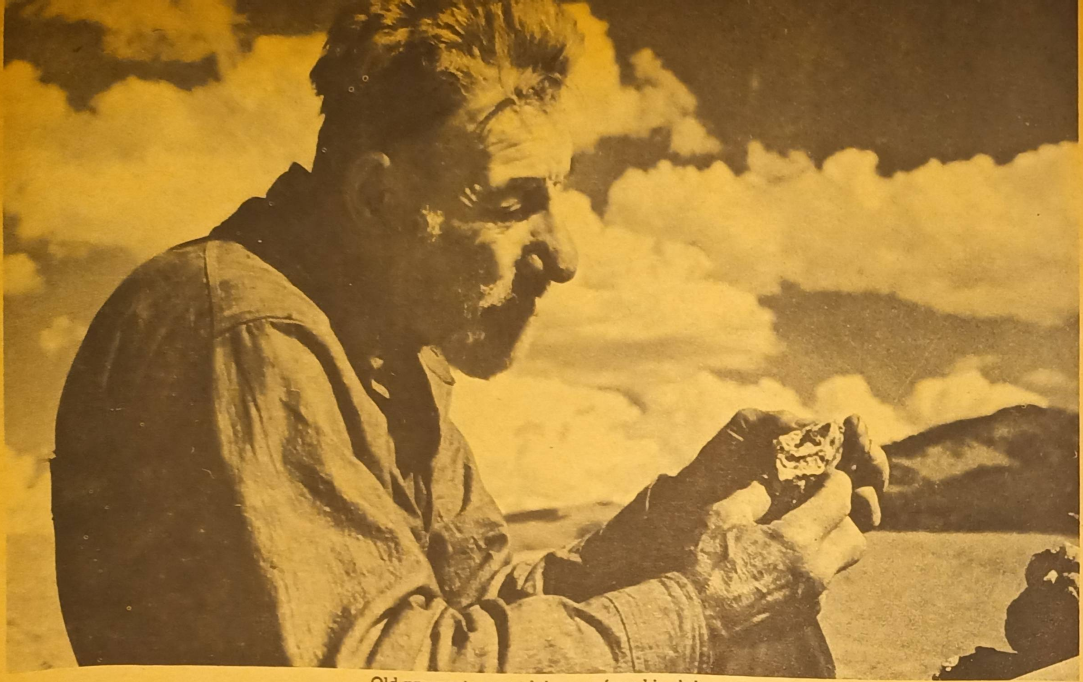
When the stage of yesteryear was set and the curtain rose on a new day for Virginia City, old-timers and present-day supporters of Charlie's plan got all dressed up in clothes of gold rush days to add to the realism of the city's rebirth. In no time at all, Montanans came from every corner of the state and tourists started to put Virginia City on their must-see list.

There are many stories told of old sourdoughs who wandered into rebuilt Virginia City after being up in the hills for a long spell. One old character who had developed a habit of talking to himself and answering back came in clear sight of the lower end of Wallace Street just at dusk. He stumbled into a situation that really set his hair on end. Sure 'nuff lights and sounds were com-

Above, a unique fluting iron which forms a part of an interesting display grouping.

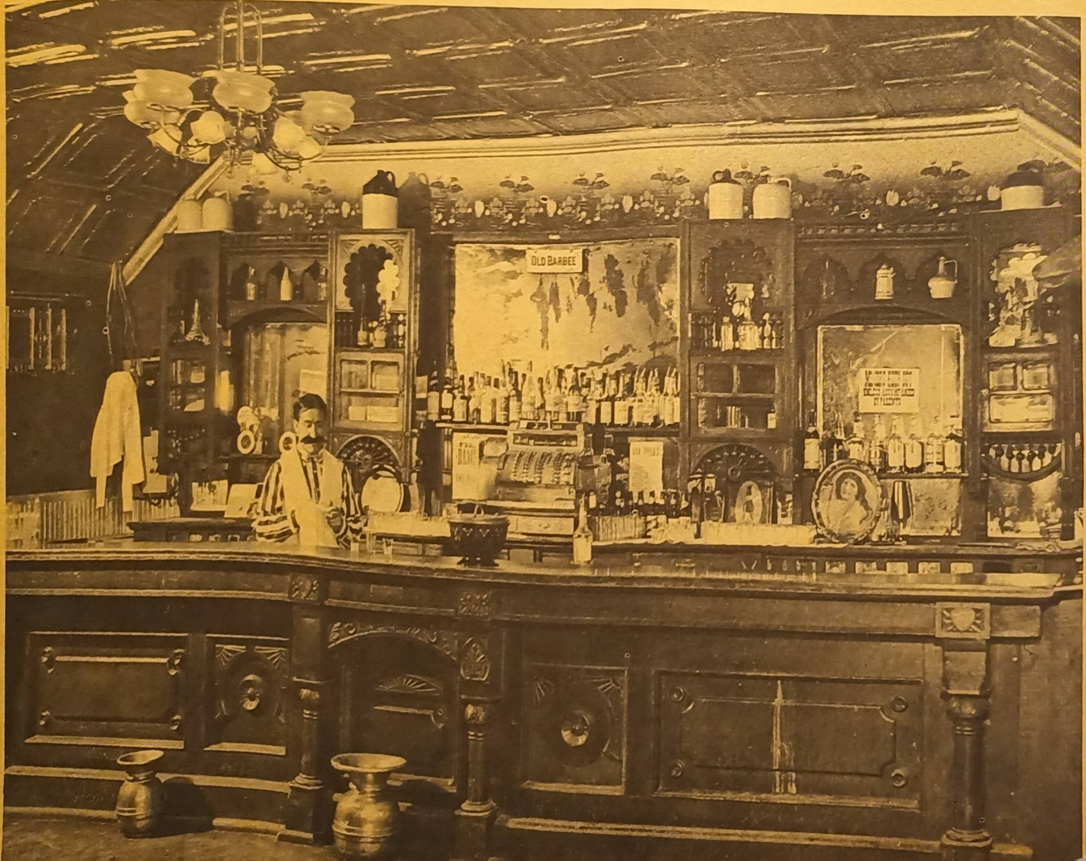
Pictured below is the restored old barn and Fairweather Inn on Virginia City's main street.





Old prospector examining ore from his claim

The bar in the Bale of Hay Saloon



Customer's mugs in the old-time barber shop, restored in Virginia City by Charles Bovey

ing from the cluster of buildings he knew were deserted. Edging his way in closer his blurred eyes caught sight of women in hoop skirts and men wearing embroidered vests and slouch hats.

Right off, as he came to the Bale of Hay Saloon, he was well aware of recognizable sounds coming from a long dead past. Yet, as always, he was quick to take full advantage of any opportunity that came his way. So without further thought, he pushed his way through the swinging doors, crossed the floor bowing to the ladies as he passed, stepped up to the shining brass rail and with a slight tremble in his voice said, "Gimme some Old Crow."

Without knowing it, old Si Slater had stepped plumb in the middle of the full realization of Charlie Bovey's dream. It was home-coming week for Montana Pioneers who had selected Virginia City for their annual convention.

TODAY, WHEN you step out of your car and stroll down the wooden sidewalk in the restored section of town you feel like you are walking through the pages of history come-to-life, so realistic is the scene. The show-window of a small jewelry shop invites you to come in and see the latest timepieces just in by stage from the East. Next door, a peep through the curtains of a dressmaker's shop reveals a fitting of a high-fashion gown with bustle and stays. In the barber shop, the setting is correct in every detail, down to the cut hair on the floor, posters of burlesque queens on the walls, and a stack of *Police Gazettes*.

For those interested in early-day transcontinental travel, a visit to the Wells, Fargo office puts you right back into that time. Outside, the stage is all hitched up with horses rarin' to gallop off. You can take a ride around town and up to Boot Hill on regular scheduled runs, to get the feel of rocking leather suspension.

Inside the Express office, the floor is stacked with leather-bound trunks and suitcases, special packages of vital supplies, packs with gold pans, picks and shovels attached, along with steel strongboxes. At the counter, two dancehall girls in traveling clothes are trading a poke of gold to the mustached clerk for a ticket to their next engagement.

Back in the far corner, a Pony Express rider, fringed buckskin jacket and all, is busy making out his report which includes sighting two small parties of Indians in the distance, along the trail.

When a woman walks into the general store, she steps right into her great-grandmother's high-buttoned shoes for an 1870 shopping tour. Everything is arranged as it was about a century ago.

You can imagine yourself getting together a winter's supply of staple foods, then looking over some hand-operated appliances and luxuries such as a fluting iron, fancy hanging kerosene lamp, spinning wheel, butter churn, or a talking machine.

Meantime, the man of the house can be picking out a new corn planter, an ox yoke, some steel cut nails, horseshoes, harness, a wagon jack, scythe and pitchfork—and a gold pan just in case he got the urge to try his luck.

A look at the price tags reveals that they were not far off from present-day costs. Everything was high and hard to come by. Goods had to be freighted by ox teams hundreds of miles from the head of navigation on the Missouri or from round-the-Horn steamers at San Francisco.

Going on down to the end of the block the trail leads into the re-stocked Bale of Hay Saloon where you can take on some refreshments and relaxation. Before you get there, you are almost knocked over by the blasts of sound coming through the windows and swinging doors. Charlie has filled the front room with a wild assortment of coin-operated music makers. Included are player pianos, hand-cranked street organs, music boxes and and a four-piece orchestra monstrosity which does its stuff for a twenty-five cent piece.

In the rear adjoining room the long elaborately decorated mahogany bar serves straight whiskey and pop, and at the drop of a nickel you can have a private front row seat at thrilling melodramas as you peer down into the eyepiece of an old "Nickelodia," forerunner of the flickers.

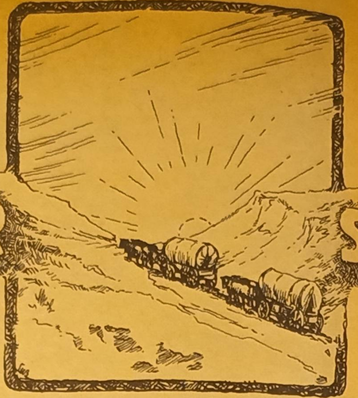
But for a real taste of live play-acting with its pathos, suspense and thrills engage a seat at the Opry House where the Virginia City Players put on regular shows. You can hiss the villain or cheer the hero as the plot unfolds. These hair-raising, tear-jerking plays usually are packed full of belly-laughs for today's audiences. Long-time favorites such as, "Ten Nights in a Bar Room," "The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" and "Miriam's Crime" packed many a house way back yonder and still do today.

NO STAGED dramas, however, are the scenes of frontier days which Charlie Bovey has brought back to life. They are the real thing, uncovered from obscurity and put back in place piece by piece. There is no feeling of being in a museum when you step from lower Wallace Street into a building properly furnished with the things which great-grandfather took as a matter of course.

Much praise and honor has been heaped upon Bovey for his vision and restoration work. Many former skeptics now allow that, "Bovey has done more to preserve Montana history than any other man before him." Many pioneers wrote their names in history by helping to win the West; Charles Bovey got his there by helping to preserve what they built.

Old Washington hand press, still used to turn out Virginia City's weekly newspaper, the "Montana Post"

WASHINGTON PRESS
R. HOE & CO.
NEW-YORK
No 3749



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN

By HATTIE E. JOHNSON

Photos courtesy author

Editor's Note: This story is written in long-ago language—because no other can describe better Sara's resignation, Phoebe's quiet courage and the yearning of Big George's brave and determined heart for some timber and a patch of damp earth.

She knew without a spoken word that her husband would go to the land across the Plains. She knew he would—come hell or high water

A MIXED CROWD of perhaps ninety or one hundred men, women, and children jostled one another as they tried to find more comfortable standing room near a speaker who stood slightly above them on a rough board bench. He was a colorful and picturesque figure standing there so straight and tall, dressed in a white shirt, stiff starched collar, black bow tie, and striped vest and pants. His black hair, sideburns and handlebar mustache glistened blue-black in the sun. In one hand he held a black plug hat. It waved to and fro as he gestured excitedly with arms spread wide above his head. What he was talking about was a promised land across the desert plains.

Most who listened were farmers, their wives and children. The men stood bareheaded, holding in toil-roughened hands their dirty, sweat-stained work hats. Many wore faded and patched blue bib overalls over figured, home-sewn shirts. All wore barn boots. Women were dressed in calico prints of Mother Hubbard style, with black cotton or knit stockings and high buttoned shoes. Children were shushed quiet while the people listened intently to Mr. Green's oratory. At times his voice rose, almost to a screech, and then it would drop low; when low the men seemed to lean forward in their eagerness to catch every word.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I tell you only of facts which I know to be true about Oregon. Folks, all red-blooded Americans would wish to settle there if they could but see and know the advantages of doing so. Gentlemen, heed what I have to say and go, folks, go. Go while the land is still unsettled, so that you may select a place of your choice to pioneer yourselves a home.

"You have nothing to lose and much to gain. Go where mountains are covered with tall timber, where there are rivers and streams, where lakes both big and small lie teeming with fish, where game is for the taking, and fur bearing animals can be caught for their pelts.

"Go where the coastline stretches for miles and there's plenty of rich soil waiting to be turned into farms. Yes, folks, go and pioneer yourselves a home. I know your question is—are there not hostile redmen to be encountered, are not the desert plains hazardous to cross, will not we suffer from lack of fresh water? Well, my answer is yes.

"Yes, folks, you may encounter both friendly and hostile Indians. The desert is long and hot. But no man should hesitate or refuse to fight for that which he wants. Folks, if you encounter friendly Indians, then you must keep them so; fulfill their demands, if possible. If you encounter hostile Indians and they come fighting, men, you must meet them fighting. You must fight like hell. I say do not try to cross the desert in a small group, but organize. Gather together and form a body so large that, come what may, you can overcome and withstand any hardship or obstacle. You must be well prepared, have many guns and much ammunition. Teach every woman and child old enough to load, sight and fire a musket. You will need good oxen and horses and sturdy wagons. You will need many men with strength and determination, and above all you will need men with guts, plenty of guts."

Among those listening stood a tall, lean, work-hardened man. His dark hair waved slightly where combed back from a high forehead. Grey eyes glistened and his square jaw set more firmly as he listened to Mr. Green's speech. His name was George W. Bunch.

By his side stood his wife, Phoebe, her sunbonnet barely reaching George's shoulder. Phoebe's pretty face mirrored worry and concern as she studied her husband's intent expression—for she knew, without a spoken word, that George would go to the land across the plains. She knew he would, come hell or high water. The worry was for her mother, Sara, who stood nearby holding to the hands of Phoebe's and George's two youngest sons. Their eldest son, David, stood beside his father.

PHOEBE could not keep her mind on the speech. How could she leave her widowed mother behind to worry and grieve for her and the boys? It was a settled fact in her mind that George would go, for had not she heard him say many's the time after a hard day's work under the hot sun that he would give anything to own a place where there was mild climate and water? His words had been, "What I'd give, hon, for a place where a cool stream flowed, so I could lie on my belly and drink long of clear water, and have trees where I could lie on my back in the shade to rest."

George longed for a place where he could plant seeds in damp soil and see them grow to be harvested, instead of standing by helplessly watching dust storms or hopper pests destroy what little crops he could raise. He had even declared that if he had a stream of swift running water, he would be so glad for it that he would open all the spigots and watch the water run riot and cut rivulets through his land—and laugh as it did so. Yes, Phoebe knew George would go to Oregon.

It was not until Green finished the speech and hopped down from the bench platform that George seemed to realize that his wife stood by his side. Grasping her hand tightly, he smiled and asked, "Did you hear what Mr. Fancy-pants said, hon? That's for us! Yep, that's for us. I'd go to hell for good land and a home for my family, where I could see my horses fat for once, where their ribs would be covered and not stand out beneath the skin like washboards the way they do now."

No further words were spoken as they made their way through the crowd to where their wagon and horses waited. George helped Phoebe, Sara and the boys up into the wagon, then loosed the tie ropes from the scrubby cottonwood tree, climbed upon the front seat beside Phoebe, flipped the leather lines, called "Haw, giddup!" and they were moving. As horses and wagon slowly circled the milling audience, George noticed small groups huddled together here and there. He knew they were discussing the possibilities of a wagon trip across the plains and wished he had tarried to talk with them.

As the wagon rumbled along home over the rutted, dusty road, Sara spoke to those on the front seat. "Well, children, what did you think of that city slicker's tall speech?"

Phoebe, glancing at George, answered, "I don't believe he is a city slicker, Mother. I think he is a well read and experienced gentleman, and, if what he says is true, that land across the plains must indeed be a wonderful place.

"But don't you go worrying, as no one is going to go traipsing to a new land until they know the facts and what they be about. People with sense will think a long time before taking Mr. Green's advice."

George seemed to grow inches taller as he squared his shoulders and sat more straight. Then he spoke, not just to Phoebe, but to all in the wagon. "I'll tell you for certain, no one needs to think long to know that if that Oregon country is half as good as he says, it's a sight better place to be. And I'm going to do a heap of thinking about it and just maybe some doing, too. If that country has timber and lakes then there's got to be rain and water. Where there's land and water, then, with work, one can grow seeds. So it sounds good to me. You bet your britches I'm going if others do."

That night, long after the family had gone to sleep, George and Phoebe lay wide-eyed and whispered about the new land and if they should risk their lives to try to go there. Warm tears fell upon George's shoulder as Phoebe confessed, "I do want to go, but we can't leave Mother behind. She would want to go and I will need her when my time comes."

George knew Phoebe was afraid and he was quick to compromise. Sara might go along, he promised, if she could be made to understand she must leave her belongings and take only the most needed clothing. Space and weight would be a problem.

When Phoebe told her mother the next morning of their decision and asked if she wished to come along, Sara, who was sweeping the floor, dropped the broom, then sat down, crying, "Oh, God, have mercy upon us. I was afraid of this."

For a long time the two women remained silent. Then Sara said in a low voice, "Well, child, if it is to be so, of course I want to go, but it's going to be hard for one so old."

IN THE days that followed—perhaps to dull the despair she felt at leaving her old home—Sara tried to do more than her share toward preparing for the journey. She carded wool and sat at the wheel long hours spinning yarn and rolling it into huge balls to carry along. She wove warm scarfs and knitted sweaters and socks for each of the family. Sara stood by as George slaughtered their flock of ducks and chickens; then she gathered up and washed the most downy feathers and fashioned soft tick mattresses of them.

George was so busy he spent little time at home. Traveling about he met with groups of men wherever and whenever possible to discuss fixing covered wagons and trading stock. Farmers traveled from far and near by surrey, wagons, buggies and on horseback to meet at town halls, country stores, home gatherings, barn dances or in parks—just anywhere a group could assemble. They discussed how best to prepare food so that it would keep in a hot climate; how best to carry the water supply; what was essential to take and what they could get along without; how many horses and wagons would be necessary for each family.

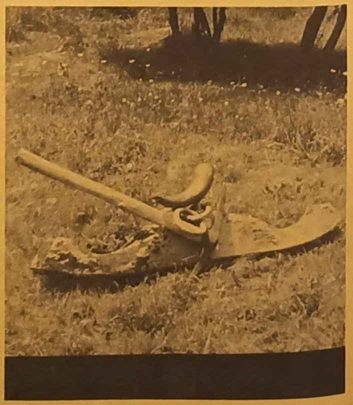
The men located as many good guns as possible and traded for or bought as many as they could. A gun club was formed and the members practiced shooting until it was said they could "hit a gnat's eye at fifty paces." Young folks and women were taught to shoot. Ladies who had always been so timid and afraid of rifles that they would scurry away with fingers stuck in ears lest they hear the loud report, now stood staunchly, lifted the heavy muskets, sighted and discharged them. Even when knocked backward or to the ground from the kick of the fired muskets, they got up determined to shoot again.

Early spring was the time selected to start the journey. The whole community was busy getting things in order. Men sold their homes, sold or traded cattle and horses, bought new wagon covers and made them fast to the beds of their heavy wagons. They cut and sewed heavy canvas to fit the frames, making them into homes for travel. Hooks, pegs and nails were driven into the outside on which to hang numerous needed articles.

Beefs were slaughtered, and meat dried or smoked and sacked. Pigs were killed and the pork made into hams, bacon sides, salt pork and sausages. Grease and tallow were poured into wooden tubs. Fruit was dried on racks beneath the sun.

Sluice dam and logs, a typical sight in early-day Oregon.

Grandfather's ox yoke, old pick and steer horn. The horn was used to call loggers to dinner.



Below, the sheep shed built in 1865. At right, steam donkeys on the move out of woods.

Corn and beans were left to mature and harden on the stalks and vines, then packed dry in rags. Carrots, parsnips, turnips and rutabagas were shredded, dried and sacked. Spices of all kinds were put into packages. Tubs of honey, sacks of wild rice, brown sugar and white, were a must.

Oxen and steers were taught to wear the yoke, pull together and obey orders. Horses were tied fast to the tail ends or wheels of wagons for a time so they could get used to seeing the white canvas covers. Hammocks were fashioned of rope and canvas and made fast to swing at the top of the wagons for use as the youngsters' beds. Light wooden frames were tacked together, set lengthwise inside the wagon beds and made fast there to hold feather ticks and wool mattresses for adults.

Women molded long tallow candles, boiled tubs of lye soap, packed compact boxes of medical supplies of the day such as quinine, turpentine, alcohol, camphor gum, whiskey, goose grease, ginger root, tansy, sage, cascara bark, pine pitch, horehound, flax seed, asafoetida, coal oil and pine tar. They gathered up bleached squares of cloth, strips of linen and linsey and flannel, an assortment of knitting needles, hairpins, curling irons, lamp wicks, corset staves, shoe buttons, button hooks, safety pins and straight pins.

As departure time grew closer, George Bunch tried to prepare Phoebe, Sara and the boys for what they might encounter while crossing the plains. And he cautioned them about what to do in case of Indian attack. Phoebe could not visualize hostile Indians bent on mutilating good people and said as much. She laughed at the idea of Indians scalping anyone, saying, "George, I don't think they would do it, as they too, are human. I am not afraid of Indians but I fear the wild animals and rattlesnakes. And most of all I worry about how we will carry water enough for our needs."

THE TICER family lived not far from the Bunch property. The two families had been inseparable friends for many years. Both were poor but honest people. The Ticers, having had a long streak of bad luck were poorer than the Bunches who, over a number of years, had saved up a little money. Both men had heard Mr. Green's speech but had talked little about it.

Now the Ticers and Bunches met and George asked, "Well old pard, are you getting ready for the trip?"

Ticer looked sad as he shook his head and answered, "The Lord knows, George, I want to go, but I just can't make it. I guess there's no use me getting my hopes up 'cause I just can't make it. My family's too large and my horses too poor and George, I ain't got a red cent to my name. Mommie and I, we've talked it over and we know we can't go now, so we prayed to God that someday we might make it there and join you somewhere."

George was sorry for his friend, but if Ticer said he couldn't make it, he couldn't. So George went about his usual duties farming and tending stock. He shod all the horses and trimmed their manes and tails. It was near spring, time to start the trip, before they realized it. Soon there were but two months left before departure time.

The Bunches were early risers, being up each morning before complete daylight. One morning as George sat at the kitchen table beside two flickering candles waiting for his breakfast, both he and Phoebe were startled by someone's heavy footsteps on their porch crossing to the kitchen door.

There was no knock but the door was opened, and there framed in the doorway stood Ticer. His eyes were red-rimmed and his face showed signs of a sleepless night.

Without even a greeting, he said, "George, oh George, you just can't do it!"

George realized his friend was grieved and worried, so rose from his chair, crossed the kitchen and stood facing his visitor. The two toil-worn old friends stood there for a moment and tears dropped to their chests. Then to cover the embarrassing situation, George slapped Ticer on the back, saying, "Well, hell, come on in! Sit and have a bite and we'll talk it over."

So the two sat at the breakfast table across from each other and after they had eaten Phoebe's griddle cakes and hot coffee, George promised to help Ticer financially and told him, "I'll get you a new wagon, four horses, canvas for wagon covers and will help you fix up your wagons."

Amanda Ellen, youngest daughter of Phoebe and George Bunch. Died at age 94 on June 26, 1962.

Mother Amanda Noah, aged 94 years, (author's mother) seated beside old cast iron stove and rocking chair used more than a century.

Ticer was worried about the short time left to prepare, so George, Ticer and their friend Williamson got busy at once. The Ticers worked night and day and were ready to take their place along with other friends and relatives when the wagons rolled.

Among those traveling together were the Bunches, Ticers, Porters, Foxes, Parkers, Smiths, Hollands, Browns, Nelsons, Goulds and Williamsons. The day of departure was a day of sadness for all. Ladies' handkerchiefs were soggy from tears as handshaking, farewell kisses, and goodbyes were bade to those who stood left behind. They waved and watched as the caravan moved slowly away from the Missouri soil. It seemed unreal, like some sort of dream, for never before had any of them seen such a large group of persons together at one time or so many wagons and horses. To those watching the white canvas-covered wagons moving away in an uneven line with the early morning sunrays upon them, it resembled a long chain of glistening jewels stretching into the distance. They stood sadly until the train was obliterated by the billowing dust clouds rising behind.

HORSES not used to the bobbing white canvas and all the noise so near their ears were nervous and hard to manage. They snorted and lunged at times and could not be kept in a straight course. The ox teams at first refused to budge and had to be encouraged with the goad stick. Then, once they did move, they moved fast, one pulling in one direction, the other pulling opposite, unmindful of the drivers' orders. So the first few days' travel was one of disorder, hard on both beasts and men.

May Bunch posed for a Marshfield, Oregon, photographer in 1886.

Progress was slow, for both the horses and oxen went where and at what speed they wished until they were thoroughly tired out by their own behavior and seemingly realized they should pull together and obey commands. The milch cows and other animals made fast at the rear ends of wagons began to lead as they should instead of making it difficult for both themselves and the horses by bracing themselves against their lead ropes.

Family sleep wagons were much lighter than the supply wagons, so horses were changed from lighter wagons to the more heavily loaded twice daily. The scouts and horseback riders who rode alongside the moving wagons often pointed and chuckled with amusement as they studied the many bobbing, bumping articles fastened to the outside of the wagon beds, some hung on wooden pegs, some on nails, others on wire line or hemp ropes. This array consisted of washboards, copper boilers, lanterns, picks, pitchforks, shovels, hand axes, handsaws, cross-cut saws, jack screws, chains, brush knives, scythes, horse collars, extra harness, rubber boots, raincoats, rolls of canvas, tea kettles, water buckets and cast iron kettles.

As the wagons rolled, their iron-rimmed wooden wheels sent small particles of gravel flying to each side. Dust billowed high in the air and drifted back so that those traveling at the rear suffered from the dust and were forced to tie damp cloths or 'kerchiefs over their noses and mouths. The oxen traveled more slowly than the horses so the horse-drawn wagons were forced to stop now and then and wait for the ox teams to catch up before moving on.

The first few hundred miles were covered with little serious difficulty because fresh water was plentiful. There were scrub brushes and grass for cattle feed. Around camp each evening children romped and laughed as they played "drop the hanky," "tag," "hide and seek" or "leap frog." Men and women who had carried along musical instruments brought them forth and everyone joined in singing. Wagon travel seemed to be an exciting event for children, but it was a time of adjustment to a new way of life for the women, although not too strenuous an effort for the men.

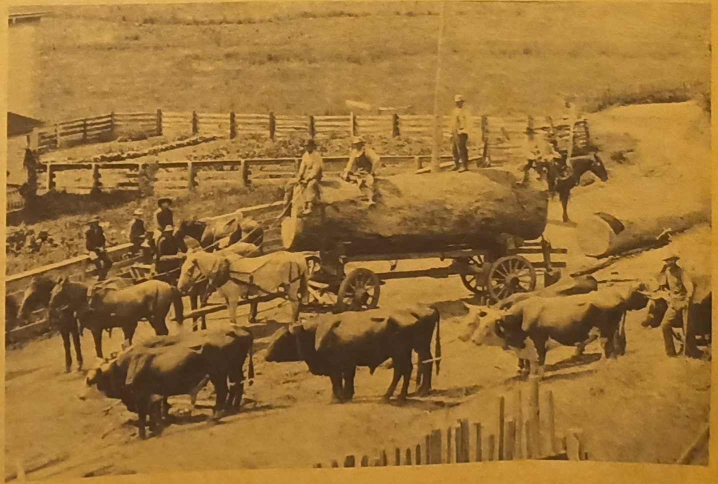
OVER THE next few weeks, travel conditions and the rate of advance didn't vary much. There had been a few childbirths and some of the children had been sick with colds, sore throat, earache or toothache, stomach disorders or some other minor ailment but no serious sickness or deaths had occurred. But after a month, the situation seemed to change almost overnight. The terrain became rocky and hard to travel. The flat land lay mile after mile with no green grasses or shrubs to be seen, just tumbleweeds and sagebrush. One could gaze as far as the eye could see, and see the land level. It was a hot desert plain where everything was burned dry and dead, and in the far distance a lavender mist met and blended with a gray sky.

The sun's rays were merciless on the caravan, blistering arms and faces of the weary travelers. Cattle walked with mouths open, sweat dripping from their moving bodies. Horses and oxen tired and slowed their pace. There were frequent rest stops for the teams and cattle, but no relief for those riding beneath the canvas wagon covers. Not even a tiny breeze could get through. Babies beat with tiny red fists, screaming; children wiped tears from flushed red cheeks and begged mothers to "Go home, Mommy, please go home." In their misery they did not seem to realize that to go home was an impossibility.

The dust which now rose continually and must be breathed was part alkali. Worry and the heat caused mothers to become quick tempered. Even the younger persons showed the strain of travel and hardship. Men tried to be brave, face the sun. and not show their discomfort. But their concern about their stock, their families' short water supply, and slow progress showed plainly.

They tied their handkerchiefs over sunburned necks, pulled hat brims low over their eyes and plodded on.

Graves and tombstone of pioneers George and Phoebe Bunch



Early logging by ox teams and horses. Loggers snaked the huge logs over greased skid roads to water.

Most men walked as much as possible to save the strength of the animals pulling the wagons, and they continued to walk beneath the hot sun even when their feet were so blistered they limped as they made their way along. Water was carefully rationed and so was the grain.

During the night, the coyotes howled, and there seemed to be rattlesnakes between every layer of rock outcropping and beneath each sagebush. Children were taught to look well before stepping, and were kept near the camp. Dogs were trained to bark if snakes, porcupines, or other animals came near.

There were no trees or heavy brush for firewood to be found anywhere, so women made their way cautiously among the rocks picking up and placing buffalo chips in their aprons. The dried foods had held out well but the people yearned for fresh meat. Snares were fashioned to catch jack rabbits and some were caught, but it was discovered they were wormy and not fit for food.

Scouts had discovered no sign of the redmen as yet—neither had they found sign of buffaloes or water. For days they had been searching for any indication of a seepage or underground spring. At night while people tried to get needed rest, their horses trampled round and round, and snorted to free their nostrils of crusted alkali dust. Cattle milled and pawed the dry earth within their makeshift corrals. Eventually, some of the stock had to be butchered to supply badly needed meat, and the blood, even though taken warm, provided a bit of moisture and helped conserve what little water was left.

One day in the late afternoon, scouts rode in to report the first indications of Indians. They had come upon the site of a massacre. The signs were old but told a frightening story. Wagon tracks and a bit of cloth from some woman's or child's dress had been discovered. They followed as best they could the faint wheel marks in the desert ground. Then there before them lay scattered about the skeletal remains of humans and horses. The people appeared to have been scalped. There were six wagons—some upright and some overturned—but no signs of saddles, bedding, clothing or other usable objects were left. The Indians had fared well for it was believed there had been more cattle and horses than those few which had been killed. When this news spread through the caravan, the women looked stunned. Only then was the danger of the redmen being considered a fact.

According to the scouts, this gruesome scene was directly ahead, so the wagon masters ordered a change of route. Stern notice was given to keep all fires small, and to make no undue noise while camping at night. Extra scouts were put on patrol. Some were assigned to watch for Indians, others to continue the search for water. All men loaded their muskets and placed them where they could be handy in an emergency. The women and children became very quiet, expectant and listening; each time a coyote howled or a dog barked, they grew tense with fear.

One young woman became so frightened and upset, she gave birth to her baby two months prematurely and, as hard as Dr. Barnes and Sara tried, they did not succeed in saving its life. The tiny body was wrapped in a shawl and by candle and torchlight it was laid to rest beneath rocky soil not far from the camp. The sad sick mother rode on in the covered wagon over the rough trail the next morning.

THIS NEXT day seemed to be one of good luck for the caravan, for a scout found a water spring. It was little more than a seepage in a low sink, but a hole was dug which soon filled with water, and near the dampness grew tall tufts of coarse grass, green weeds and sagebrush. About the same time, some of the other riders sighted fresh buffalo sign. For the first time in days the Missourians felt they could relax and enjoy camp. If buffaloes were near then the redmen must be at a distance. Indians killed and frightened buffaloes so that signs of both were not fresh at one place long.

Camp was made for several days. Men rode out early on a hunt and brought meat back to camp on the backs of their ponies. It was a time of rejoicing for all as the huge iron kettles hung over the fires and bubbled. The aroma of buffalo stew filled the air, and children clapped hands, skipped, and squealed with glee as they watched their fathers scrape away the coals and remove a huge chunk of buffalo meat roasted to a turn. From the layers of paper and crusts of mud, the meat rolled out steaming and was torn apart while almost too hot to touch.

George Bunch's old 1852 musket with which he killed Indian Chief who attacked the encampment.

Much meat was smoked or roasted for future use. Horses and cattle drank their fill and browsed, even of the sagebrush. So all were rested and filled when they proceeded on their journey, and there was enough fresh water on hand for some time.

During the following weeks, camp was made on open plains with as short a stop at night as possible. Children were tiring of the day in, day out, week in, week out, month in, month out traveling, and were restless and fretful.

Just before water was rationed again, a stream was located. Between rocky outcroppings, scrub cottonwood trees, willows and buffalo grass grew in a ravine. The stream was small but afforded plenty of fresh water, and there was a good camping flat nearby. In order to get the wagons here, the drivers had to detour around rock ledges and zigzag around deep sink holes. One scout gathered wood and dug a waterhole while the other returned to the caravan to guide it to the camping spot. Traveling near the sink holes was a dangerous undertaking as the ground seemed to have given way from the natural hard dry surface and just dropped straight down to depths of six to ten feet. Some of the sink holes were ten to fifteen feet across.

It was while making their way over this uneven terrain that Phoebe was caught with severe pains. Dr. Barnes was called and predicted to George and Sara, "I believe she will deliver by midnight."

That evening he sat in the wagon beside Phoebe while Sara cooked the evening meal; then Sara took over while Dr. Barnes went to rest. Through the rest of the night she sat with her daughter while George and the boys slept soundly nearby.

Sara did not call Dr. Barnes. She cared for Phoebe in this childbirth as she always had before. In the early morning she grasped George's shoulder and gave him a shake.

"George, you sleepy head, wake up! You're the father of a nice baby girl and Phoebe wants your congratulations."

The baby was named Eliza Jane and was well and strong; Phoebe, however, did not recover soon. For days she lay pale and listless as the wagon juggled and bounced along the rough ground. It was many weeks before the young wife regained her health.

AFTER WEEKS of travel, some of the children became feverish, then others, and finally there were nine, in all, sick. Some were very bad and lay with flushed faces, their throats swollen near shut and so sore they were unable to swallow. Dr. Barnes diagnosed it as being diphtheria.

He called on Sara for help, and for days the two kept busy climbing into and out of one wagon, then another, to attend the sick. Before going near the ailing children, Sara always got out her medicine box and took from it a bag of asafoetida. From this she broke off some small pieces, tying each in a little piece of cloth to which she fastened a string loop. These she placed around the boys', Phoebe's, George's and her own neck. In the old days it was believed that the gum would prevent those wearing it from catching a disease, as it was thought the fumes from the ill-smelling asafoetida killed germs. Possibly this was but an old granny hokus-pocus belief, but nevertheless most older people of that day relied on it.

In spite of all Dr. Barnes and Sara could do, the children kept dying. Of the six left, four were in very critical condition and so Sara asked Dr. Barnes if she might try a remedy of her own. Might she swab their throats with kerosene or, called then, common coal oil?

Dr. Barnes looked at Sara for some time, then said, "Well, Mrs. Sara, if you think it might help and you can get permission to do so from their parents, I see no reason why you cannot use it. For those children will die, anyway, so you may as well try, but I do not believe it will help."

Only the parents of those four who were considered in a dying state consented. Sara whittled small sticks and tied linsey straps at one end to make some crude swabs. These she dipped in a glass of coal oil, using a different one on each child. Three times daily, this swabbing was repeated and on the third day three of those treated were recovering. Their throats were not so swollen and sore; the fever had subsided. The fourth child, small and sickly by nature, passed on.

Old handmade trunk covered with buffalo hide belonged to Granny Sara. It was later given to Phoebe, her daughter, then sent to Amanda, Phoebe's daughter (standing behind trunk).

On the fifth day, the three children who survived were able to swallow nourishment. The wagontrain moved westward leaving many small graves unmarked by the wayside.

AS PHOEBE gained strength, Sara weakened and became ill. She had worked too hard to help others and now seemed unable to withstand her own sickness. Sara did not complain but lay quietly on her feather bed day after day, while the wagon joggled along.

The scouts again rode in with news of fresh Indian sign not far away. This last massacre was so shocking and repulsive, it was difficult to describe.

Two scouts had been riding a mile apart when one sighted something white protruding above the sagebrush. He rode in the direction of his companion, hailed him, and they both made their way to where the object was sighted. There they found partly decomposed corpses and animals, with bits of clothing and belongings scattered over a wide area. Several wagons were here and there, the frames broken and the canvas covers gone.

One wagon bed was turned upside down, its wheels in the air. Over and around it, bees and flies buzzed. The scouts shuddered as they viewed the horrible sight, for beneath the wagon lay the bodies of children and women, some having been scalped. It was believed the Indians may have taken other women along with them. The train had been completely stripped of anything of value so the scouts left the gruesome scene in haste.

This news frightened even the most fearless of the pioneers. Orders to drivers were given: they would again change course in order to by-pass the massacre site. That night, wagons were drawn to form a circle, and camp was made. The evening meal was eaten in silence. Reverend Nelson was joined by all in earnest prayer that they might be spared the fate of those other unfortunate settlers.

Since this was the second group of wagons sighted and, like the first, appeared to have been traveling alone, it was believed the two may have at one time been together in one large caravan. They may have had different opinions of which direction to travel, breaking up into two small units, neither of which was strong enough to fight off an Indian attack.

The Missourians wished to travel on and leave this territory as far distant as possible, but fast progress was impossible with such poor weak animals to transport them. Many cattle fell by the wayside and had to be shot, left there for coyote food. Wagon masters decided to lighten the loads by discarding everything possible, even some heavier work tools which would be needed later on.

With this in mind, George Bunch climbed into the sleeping wagon where Phoebe sat nursing their baby, Eliza, and Sara lay sick upon her bed. He looked about saying, "We have to lighten our loads. The horses are giving out. Look over our belongings and discard every article we don't absolutely need."

George picked up his extra pair of worn boots and emptied a small wooden box of its contents. Then he spied Sara's old trunk, and pointing toward it, said, "Hon, empty everything out of there, tie what you need in a shawl or blanket, and we'll chuck that old trunk. We don't have to keep that."

Seated between children is Eliza A. Bunch who was born in covered wagon while crossing the plains.

Hearing this, Sara, sick as she was, rose to a sitting position. Her eyes flashing, she protested, "No! No! George, you can't throw away my trunk. It's of seasoned wood and not very heavy, and I want that to go along. Phoebe's father made it by hand! He killed and skinned a buffalo, and tanned the hide himself to cover that trunk.

"My husband made that trunk for me! It carries only my clothing and that of your children, George. I want Phoebe to have it as a keepsake in remembrance of her father and me. You can discard my heavy coat and my shoes, instead, for I will need them no more."

Phoebe looked at Sara and asked, "Mother, why do you say such a thing? You will be needing both your coat and shoes."

"No, children," Sara shook her head, "I will need them no more. You may not believe what I tell you, but I know I speak the truth. I shall be with you no longer by the end of the week and, George, your wagon will be that much lighter. Carry the trunk along but do promise me, remove the till from the trunk and place it over my face before you leave me on the plains."

George and Phoebe thought Sara did not realize what she was saying, but George granted her wish and let the old trunk ride on. On the last morning of the week, Sara's words came true; she was found sleeping—her last long sleep. Somewhere out there on the desert plains beside the Oregon Trail Sara was placed in a shallow grave with but a cross marker at the head.

After Sara was laid to rest, the caravan moved on without further sickness for weeks, then adults and children alike came down with diarrhea and cholera. Some of them died.

ONE NIGHT while camped by a small but swift flowing stream, a scout rode in saying excitedly, "Indians are coming and they are riding fast in this direction!"

Another scout galloped in behind him and yelled reassuringly, "There are only six Indians and I see no more following!" So three men stood ready with loaded muskets to intercept the redmen.

When they were but a short distance from camp, they halted and one held high in the air above his head a makeshift white flag. It was fashioned by fastening a light grey rabbit skin to the end of a pole. They were signaled to come on into camp.

As the Indians approached, a tall one riding the lead horse smiled, exposing a row of even white teeth, and spoke, "Good, good. Hello, hello. No, no."

He repeated those three words over and over, proudly grinning as he did so. It was soon discovered he could speak no more of the white man's language, but he seemed to understand some things spoken to him. From motions and grunting, the scouts understood that the Indians wished to exchange meat for blankets, pots, pans or saddles; and wanting to continue friendly, the white men agreed.

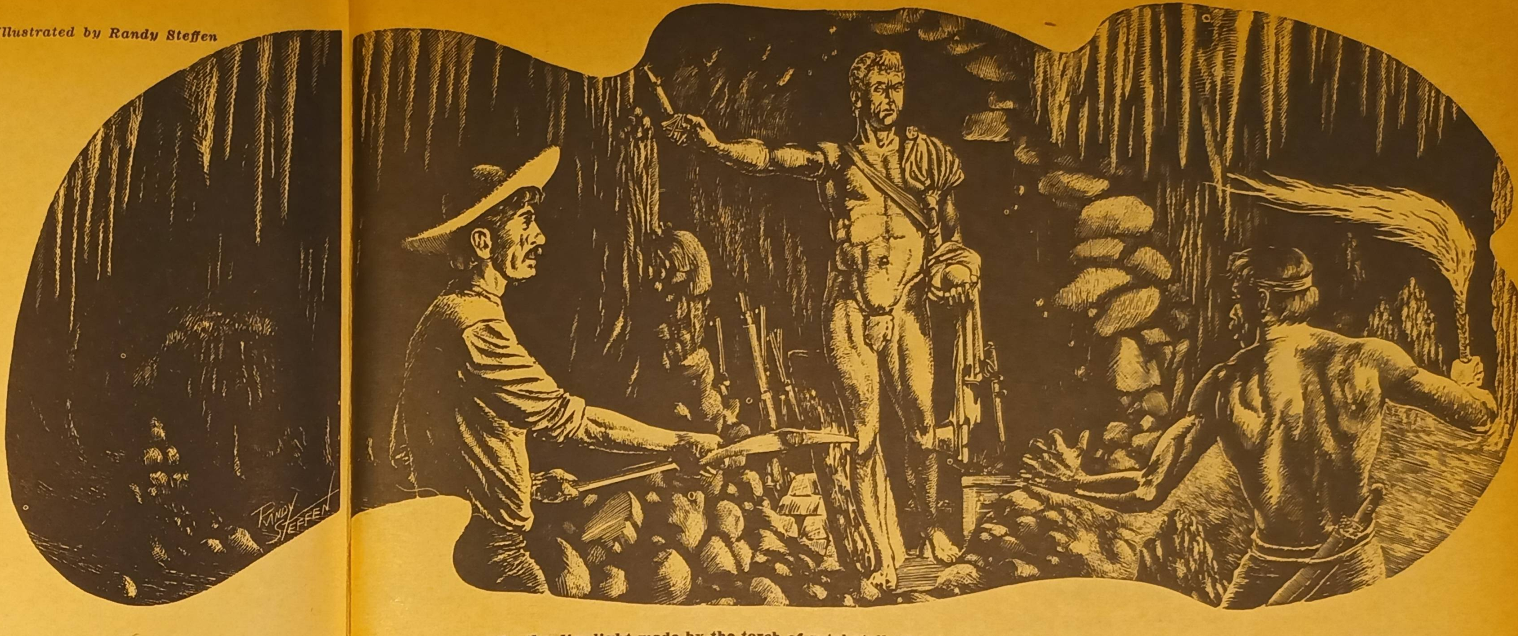
The Indians did not immediately leave camp but stood pointing and making signs that they desired to be fed. They were given tin plates filled with food which they gobbled down, then passed their plates for more. It took far too much of the scarce supplies to fill those brown bellies.

(Continued on page 50)

...NOT THE WILL OF GOD

A TRUE WEST Classic

Illustrated by Randy Steffen



"In the dim light made by the torch of sotol stalk, Tomás and Don Joaquin saw a figure of bronze larger than a real man. In its right hand was a dagger, securely bound there by rawhide thongs."

by J. FRANK DOBIE

Editor's Note:

From APACHE GOLD AND YAQUI SILVER, Copyright 1928, 1931, 1938, 1939 by J. Frank Dobie, with permission of Little, Brown and Company, publishers.

THERE were three of us—a border ranchman, his *pastor*, and myself. We had stopped at the goat camp after a long day's ride on horses. The goat-herder's fire was very cheerful as it blazed against a natural windbreak of black chaparral brush, and the odor of kid ribs roasting over it made us forget the norther.

A man is like a dog. After he has eaten he is loath to stir from warmth.

"Tomás," said the border ranchman, "I want you to tell my friend why you left Mexico for this country."

Tomás was pinching the end off a shuck cigarette filled with black-leaf "Lobo Negro" tobacco. He took a coal of fire in his fingers to light it. He adjusted the frazzled serape about his neck and shifted his squatting position so as to be a little more out of the cold wind.

"Patrón," he said, "I see you are taking a cough. I gathered today some of the roots of the *anacahuita*. It will be well to make you a little tea."

I had not noticed the cough. The old Mexican got a tomato can from which the top had been melted, unwrapped a flour sack that swathed the roots, broke them into the can, filled it with water, and spent fully two minutes adjusting a heap of coals to set it on.

A coyote began howling not far away.

"The coyotes," remarked the *pastor*, "have for three mornings now sung on top of the hills after sun-up instead of in the valleys before the sun came out. It will rain."

Soon the tea had boiled.

"It would be better," remarked the border ranchman, "if it had some lemon in it."

"Tomás," he said again, after expressing his thanks, "I want you to tell us why you left Mexico to come to Texas."

"A coyote," the goat-herder dallied, "has killed a black kid. It has always been known that coyotes will not molest a goat that is black. Something strange is waiting to happen. Perhaps it will snow this winter."

But at last Tomas got his tale going. This is what he told.

DEEP within the Sierra Madre, in the state of Chihuahua, on what is known as the Arroyo Colorado, Tomás as a young man lived and worked for a merchant named Joaquin Villareal. The store was the only store of the village—a mere groupment of huts. Around it were great forests running down into the canyons and crawling up to the mountain crests. Scattered back in the mountains lived a few timber cutters, and they all depended upon Don Joaquin Villareal. He furnished them what scanty supplies they had and periodically went out to check the ties they had cut.

Then, maybe once a year, they came into the village and settled their accounts.

Once when the time came to make a checking of the ties, Don Joaquin took sick. He decided to send Tomás in his place. Tomás knew all the men and he knew the country in a general way, though he had never made one of these trips of inspection.

He must, he knew, go prepared with bed and provisions. So with a canteen of water on one side of his flathorned saddle, a morral (a fiber bag) of frijoles and tortillas on the other, and a blanket tied on behind he set forth.

"My mule," admonished Don Joaquin, "will show you the way."

She was a good little mule, but Tomás' trouble was that he did not take enough provisions. He had forgotten how large and sparsely settled the country was. At the end of four days he had checked two tie-cutters and had consumed all his food but a half-dozen buttons of garlic and that many tortillas. That evening he came to a poor, lonely *jacal*, or cabin. He recognized the inhabitant who came out to meet him as one of his employer's men named Ignacio. He was hospitably invited in to eat, and to spend the night.

"Though we have very little," said Ignacio, "it is yours."

LITTLE enough it proved. For supper there was nothing but parched corn and tea from mulato bark, without sugar. Tomás went out to his saddle, took from the morral the garlic and six tortillas he had left, and added them to the table. It was a feast for the tie-cutter and his wife. They appeared to have no children.

After they were through eating Tomás said, "Tell me why you live so hard, this way."

Ignacio replied: "We have always lived hard this way. It is the will of God that we should always live this way."

There was silence for a long time. Then the woman said: "No, it is not the will of God. We could have had plenty, but my husband has not willed it."

"How is that?" asked Tomás.

"I will tell you. It is nearly ten years ago now—ten years next Christmas. It was cold. In the late evening an old, old Indian came to our *jacal*. His blanket was but shreds. The sandals on his feet were worn through. We gave him such food as we had. We had some wild artichokes as well as parched corn. The Indian was grateful. He told us a strange, strange story.

"He said that he was the very last of his tribe. I do not remember their name, but when I was a child I heard my grandmother's mother tell of their fierceness. From the earliest times this tribe had warred against the Government. The Government had forced them back into the wildest parts of the mountains. Here for years they existed but to get revenge. They got revenge by raiding every pack train that passed. In those days, you know, the Spaniards had wonderful mines at Tayopa, Gloria Pan, and other places in the Sierra Madre and brought gold and silver out on pack mules.

"The Indians killed the guards. They captured bullion of silver and bars of gold. They captured jewels meant for cathedrals and for daughters of the rich. They captured guns and ammunition and saddles plated with silver. They captured also a great bronze image of a man. All this stuff they put in a cave.

"This cave, so the old Indian said, was a room twenty feet wide and thirty feet long. First, one entered a cavern without limits. Then one went through a narrow passage. Then one was in the treasure chamber. The Indians had no desire for wealth. All they desired was their old freedom. They did not want the Spaniards ever to recover the riches. In time the pack trains ceased to pass. The rich mines were closed.

THEN the Indians sealed up the passage between the big cavern and the room full of riches. At one place, though, they left the wall very thin. In front of this false wall they set a kind of trap. Behind it they placed the image of the bronze man, and in

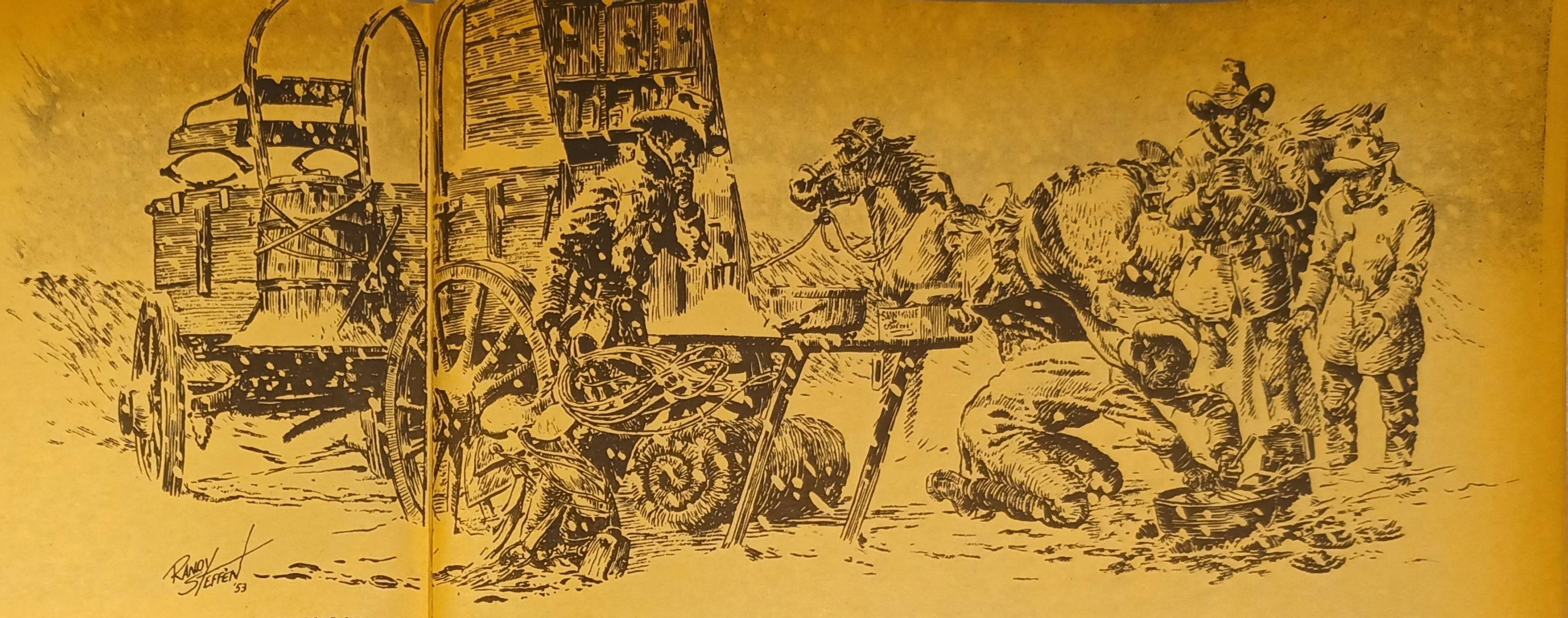
(Continued on page 44)

"You do not have to live so hard," the old Indian said. "I know where there is a room in a cavern. It is filled with bullion of silver, bars of gold, jewels and saddles plated with silver . . ."

BLIZZARD TRAIL

by JEFF MORGAN, as told to FRED GIPSON

Illustrated by Randy Steffen



"That wind was reared up on its hind legs, squalling and walking yonder. It sucked and tore at the dry cow-chip campfire, and the snow threatened to drown it out."

THAT was sure a cold cow drive. It was in the early winter of '97. It had been dry all year in what is now the Garden City country of West Texas. Cattle were starved out and poor. Old J. B. Slaughter, who ran the U-Lazy-S brand over several counties in that section, was shoving a herd north, aiming to winter on longer grass near the head of Double Mountains. This water course is one fork of the Brazos River.

No matter how lean-flanked a herd gets in bad times, there's always a few fat cattle. Out of this gather of forty-five hundred, we cut a hundred and fifty head packing enough tallow to go to the market. We trailed them separate from the rest, planning to sell them at Abilene, Texas, which was on our route.

I was put in charge of this fat bunch, with a button rider to help out. I forget this button's name, but he was a good steady hand for a kid. We pulled out ahead of the main drive. Come night, we'd ride back to feed and bed with the balance of the trail crew.

The drive was nearing Big Spring when this blizzard blew up. It was the first one of the season. It hit right at sundown, and it was a howler from the start. Snow was falling heavy in less than thirty minutes.

There was a widow woman running a little cow ranch up there on the baldies. Me and the button were right close to her pens when this weather hit. We moved fast. We didn't like the looks of that snow. We shoved our bobtail herd into them pens, then hit a long lope for camp.

Night was on us now, black as the inside of a grave, with that cold wind driving hard. It had our horses humping up under the saddle, traveling stiff-legged before we reached camp.

We located camp by the light of the supper fire. The fire was down in the bottom of a deep buffalo wallow. It was built out of dry cow chips. The wind sucked and tore at it, and the snow threatened to drown it out any minute. The negro pot-wrastler was bent over the fire, trying to rustle a batch of supper for the boys.

THAT wind was reared up on its hind legs, squalling and walking yonder. It cut through a man's garments like a sharp knife. It had them pore cattle bawling and milling and stomping. They was doing their best to turn tail to the storm and drift with it, as is natural with a cow brute. But Slaughter had every hand in the saddle, trying to hold them.

Trying to throw a herd on the bedground in weather like that! It was enough to make a man ride off down the road, talking to himself. J. B. Slaughter was a good boss to work for, but what he knowed about cows could have been writ on a postage stamp, with room to spare.

I never was a great hand to give my boss advice, but this wasn't the time to play bashful. I rode up to where he set his horse, hollering orders at the boys.

"Look," I said. "You can't bed cattle in this kind of weather. Better turn 'em loose."

That excited the old man. "Turn 'em loose!" he yelled. "Hell, man, we'll lose every head if we turn 'em loose."

I'd done stepped out of line for a common saddle hand so I figured the best thing I could do was go it whole hog.

"What you're fixing to lose," I told him, "is a crew of trail hands. They can't hold a herd after they're froze to death."

That was throwing my rocks straight at him, but he didn't try to dodge. He was the last man on earth that'd want to kill one of his hands.

"Call 'em in," he told me, and rode toward the fire.

I called the hands in and the cattle started drifting, hunting windbreaks in the storm.

Half-cooked grub was the best the pot-wrastler could turn out that night. We'd have been glad to get it raw. We et, hanging over that cow-chip fire as close as we could get without burning our boots. But the wind whipped it this way and that so hard that a man either got burnt or felt no heat at all.

I saw that Slaughter and the rest of the hands was fixing to bed down beside the fire. I looked at the button. There was plenty of scare showing in the kid's eyes. He wasn't but about thirteen, but he had more range savvy than some of them grown men. He knowed that buffalo wallow was liable to be three-four foot in snow by daylight.

"Get your hot-roll, Button," I told him. "Me'n you'll take to the high ground."

We headed for a little knoll about fifty steps from camp. I had to hold the kid to keep the wind from knocking him down. Walking against it was like trying to wade upstream against a strong current. Seem like it taken us half an hour to make them fifty steps. And then our fingers were so stiff with cold that it began to look like we'd never loosen the slipknots in our bedrolls. Damn, but it was cold!

WE bedded down together, me'n the button. That way, we could warm each other and have a double set of blankets to break the wind. But we couldn't sleep; it was too cold. All we could do was lay there and listen to that wind squalling across them baldies. It sure sung a wild and lonesome song, that wind did.

I dozed off a little along towards daylight, then got roused by a yell. It was old man Slaughter clawing up through about four feet of snow that had filled the buffalo wallow during the night. While he was asleep, that heavy covering of snow had warmed him, throwed him in a sweat, and danged nigh smothered him. He was coming up for air.

But he'd just barely got out when that icy wind hit him. The shock of it striking his sweaty body cut him down. He fell down in the snow and couldn't move.

Me'n the button hurried down after him. We dug out his bedroll, worked him over, and packed him to the calf wagon. There we found the Negro cook, so cold he couldn't move. He wouldn't even try to talk, that cook wouldn't. All he'd do was just lay there and stare at us. The look in his eyes gave me the creeps.

While this was taking place, the horse wrangler set out to light a fire. He couldn't make it. His fingers was too stiff; he kept breaking the head off his matches. By the time he got one lit, that wind had scattered his kindling to hell and gone. His match blowed out. He called it off as a bad job and come to stand beside us at the calf wagon. Both his ears was white and I knowed they was froze. His hands was as blue as the hide of a catfish.

"Where's the rest of the bunch?" I asked him.

He didn't say nothing. He just turned his back to the wind and stood there, shaking his head.

"My God!" I thought. "They've all froze to death!"

I looked at old man Slaughter laying there in the calf wagon beside that Negro. His teeth was rattling till it looked like they'd shake out of his head. His face was turning blue.

I said to the button: "We got to get them out of here!"

THE remuda stood backed up against the wagon. The manes and tails of them horses was solid lumps of ice. Me'n the button caught a couple and finally managed to get them saddled. Our ropes was stiff as wire

(Continued on page 42)

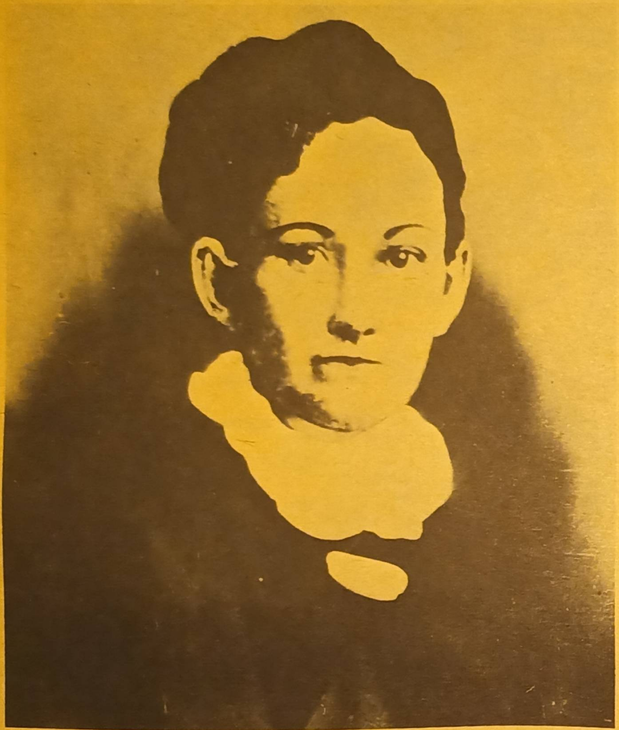
The wind howled and squalled across the baldies, singing a wild and lonesome song. It looked like we'd freeze to death in that cold camp.

Outlaw Queen

Cleopatra of the Old West, Belle Starr died with her boots on. Often called "Petticoat Terror of the Plains," her career was unrivaled in outlaw history

By GLENN SHIRLEY

Photos Courtesy Author



Editor's Note: When we asked permission of Mr. Shirley to reprint his story on Belle Starr, he immediately said "Yes—if I can make a few changes." These new facts have been included, and we agree they add to the story.

BELLE STARR, the West's most notorious gun-girl, began her hectic career February 5, 1848. Myra Maybelle Shirley, she was born, and Myra Maybelle she lived during the earlier years of her amazing life.

Myra Maybelle had a chance to become a nice little girl. Her parents, John and Elizabeth Shirley, had come from Virginia into the Ozarks of southwestern Missouri about the time this region had been abandoned by the Osage Indians. Before the middle of the century, John Shirley had become a man of many acres, slaves and fine-blooded horses, and prominent enough to give the name Shirley to a town in Washington County, where Myra and her brother Ed were born.

Shortly after Myra's birth, the family moved to Jasper County, where John Shirley filed a patent on a land grant of 800 acres, about four miles southeast of Medoc. In 1850, he began selling off his farm land, purchasing two quarter-acre lots in the town of Carthage, then in the process of development. By 1856, he was the owner of a whole block on the north side of the town square and proprietor of a widely known combination livery stable, blacksmith shop, and crossroads caravansary on the direct trail south from Independence to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and west through the central part of the Indian Territory to Santa Fe along the route surveyed by Captain Randolph B. Marcy in 1852.

John Shirley also became prominent in politics. It is said that congressmen and state political leaders consulted with him in important Democratic matters and pro-slavery patronage. He was respected enough, at least, that his influence was felt in the legislature when the act was passed creating the Carthage Academy for Young Women, tutored by William Cravens.

Myra Maybelle was one of the first pupils to master its curriculum of reading, writing, spelling, grammar, algebra, deportment, Greek, Latin, Hebrew—and she learned to play the piano. Except for a fierce nature that caused her to fight anyone, boy or girl, when aroused, she was a brilliant child and tractable. So little Myra was given the right start.

But two overpowering interests obsessed her—horses and guns. Her impressionable years were spent roaming the countryside with brother Ed. Ed was still in his teens, fond of the outdoors, wild and daring, an excellent rider and handy with firearms. In the rough and ready times which preceded Secession, Myra Maybelle became an expert horsewoman and a deadly shot with either pistol or rifle.

THE LANKY, bearded ne'er-do-well John Brown, of Torrington, Connecticut, who married twice and let his own litter of children starve while his crazy brain burned with organizing and agitating the abolition of slavery, had plunged Missouri and her neighbor, Kansas, into an undeclared civil war long before the outbreak of the War Between the States. Murder and pillage swept the land. The citizens of both commonwealths found themselves at the mercy of brigands and guerrillas who raided first one state and then the other.

Guerrilla chiefs like Jennison, Lane and Montgomery of Kansas, with their bands of Jayhawkers, laid waste to Missouri towns; and Missouri bushwhackers under Todd, "Bloody Bill" Anderson. and the indomitable, sharp-faced, beady-eyed William Clarke Quantrill desolated the Kansas countryside. The exploits of these armies of hard-riding. well-disciplined raiders attracted what later became the cream of frontier badmen—Frank and Jesse James, and the Younger Brothers—Cole, Jim, Bob and John. But many members of these bands were some of the finest men in the state. and John Shirley, like thousands of other Missourians, espoused their cause. A hot-blooded Southerner, John Shirley rejoiced in the firing upon Sumter, took comfort in the news of the first battle of Bull Run. and enthusiastically abetted his son Ed's design to organize his own band of Jasper County bushwhackers.

Myra Maybelle watched her beloved brother ride away with his company of Jasper County sympathizers to the strains of *Maryland! My Maryland!* and made plans of her own to harry the Yankees.

Her plans never materialized, however. A few months later, Ed, with Captain James Petty, George Walker and eleven other bushwhackers attempted to capture six Federal guards at a house in Carthage Square. Captain Petty was killed, Walker wounded, and Ed and the others retreated with Federal troops in pursuit to a hideout near Sarcoxie. With Ed were a couple of new recruits, a handsome Carthage boy named Milt Norris, and the son of a well-to-do farmer named James H. (Jim) Reed (or Read).

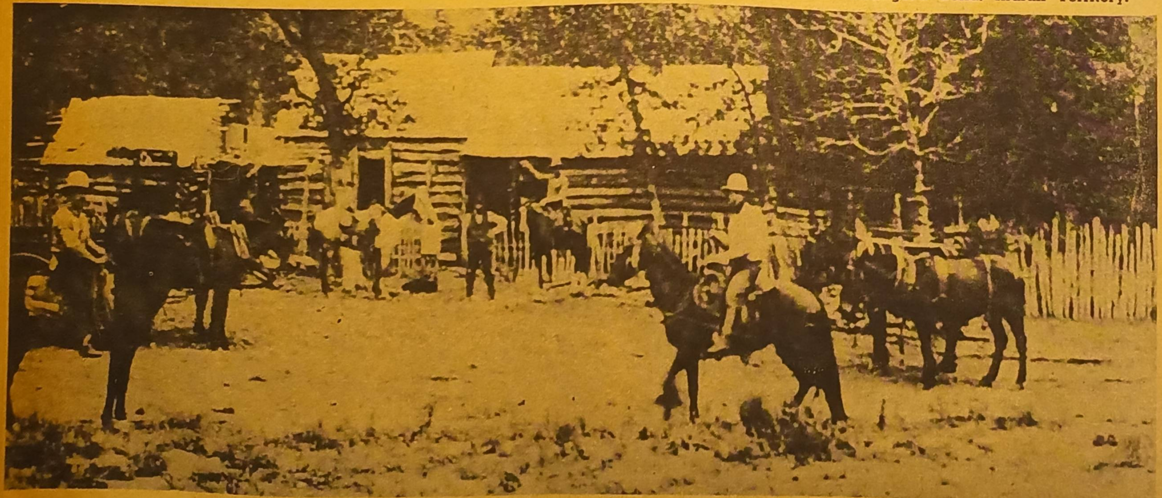
Before the war, Jim Reed had lived eight miles southwest of Rich Hill, in Vernon County. His oldest brothers, F. M. and Scott Reed, had cast their lot with the Southern cause in 1861. Soon afterward, the Jayhawkers had made things so hot around Rich Hill that the mother and her children had moved to Carthage and rented a house from John Shirley. Thus Jim and Myra became acquainted when she was thirteen.

As a boy, Reed was of a quiet, even religious, nature. He attended church regularly, and his mother used to say that he was the most helpful and kindly disposed of her several sons. But the thrilling events of border warfare stirred the adventurous blood in his veins, and he took to the hills to duplicate the feats of his brothers. Tall, hawk-faced, sandy-haired and rawhide tough, he was eighteen when he joined Ed Shirley's bushwhackers.

On the night of June 20, 1863, Ed, with young Norris, decided to take supper near Sarcoxie at the home of a Mrs. Stewart, who had often sheltered them. What Ed didn't know was that his presence in the neighborhood had become known to the Federal troops who had overrun the land, occupied Carthage, and practically held its populace captive. A squad from Company C, of the Seventh Provisional Enrolled Militia, which was camped at Cave Springs, a few miles north, moved south to Sarcoxie.

Ed and Norris were putting the finishing touches to a good home-cooked meal with whiskey and fine cigars left by Mrs. Stewart's husband who had fallen a few months before on the battlefield with General Sterling Price's brigade. In the long horse shed at the back of the house, their mounts munched corn and hay, shielded from the eyes of curious passers-by by a high board fence. The troopers covered the front of the house and rode in from each side, leaving the fence unguarded as an unlikely avenue of escape.

Ed snuffed the lamp and whirled to the window. He shattered the glass with the barrel of his Colt and leaped through the opening. Norris leaped behind him, and they ran for the fence. The troopers' guns roared all around them. One trooper leveled his carbine and coolly shot Ed twice in the back. He fell, rolling over, scrambled halfway to his knees, still clutching the pistol in his hand, when a second trooper, riding up on the ironshod heels of the first, pumped three



At left, early tintype portrait of Belle Starr. Below is shown the Belle Starr hideout at Younger's Bend, Indian Territory.

Above. Ed Reed. Belle Starr's son. Pictured below is Belle's attractive daughter. Pearl.

.36 caliber balls into his right side. Ed Shirley pitched forward into the dirt, never to run again.

Norris reached the fence and swung upward. High-aimed lead splintered the wood about him. One ball caught him in the left lung as he went over on the other side. But he managed to escape through a corn field and reached the brush of a creek. He reached camp the next day. Jim Reed carried him south and never looked back.

WHEN the news of Ed's death reached Carthage, his mother was prostrated. Myra Maybelle accompanied her father to Sarcoxie to claim the body.

Some neighborhood women had prepared the popular local hero for burial. John Shirley brought the body from the house, carrying it like a child in his arms, and put it in the spring wagon. Mrs. Stewart brought out Ed's big Walker Colt and cartridge belt and laid them on the seat beside Myra. The curious crowd waited, and the squad of Federals supervising the proceedings glared stonily over their heads. No one said anything.

John Shirley led Ed's horse from the shed and hitched it to the tailgate. Myra had picked up the cartridge belt and was fondling the revolver.

"Myra," he said, "put down that gun!"

"I'm going to make these bastards pay for this!" she cried, and snatched the big Colt from its holster.

The crowd scattered in panic. John Shirley leaped to the front of the wagon, but Myra already had the gun leveled at the troops, thumbing the hammer rapidly.

The Outlaw Queen on the streets of Fort Smith, Arkansas in 1886.

The weapon clicked emptily. The soldiers had taken the precaution of seeing that it was unloaded. And Myra Maybelle rode away in tears with her father toward Carthage. When they had gone, the troopers fired the Stewart home, razing it as a warning to others who sheltered bushwhackers.

The war in southwestern Missouri turned into nothing more than a succession of bloody reprisals. Neighbor turned against neighbor. Confederate guerillas shot Northern sympathizers, burned their houses and barns and drove off their livestock, and the Missouri State Militia and its irregular followers took revenge in like action against Southerners. In September, Carthage was razed by Federal troops and the Shirley hotel raided and burned.

The Carthage defenders constructed a fort out of the ruins of the courthouse and reoccupied it, but even that was destroyed by Jennison's Jayhawkers who returned through the town in the fall of 1864. By that time, the Shirleys had loaded what household goods they had been able to salvage into a couple of Conestoga wagons and set out for Texas. A number of ex-Missourians, who had found it more to their liking to go South and reside among those of similar temperament, already had settled in East Texas where much good land was still available.

John Shirley found a fertile piece of land about a mile east of Scyene, and about ten miles east of Dallas. Here he reverted to his old pursuits of agriculture and stock-raising. The family lived in a dugout at first, but as time dragged on, he constructed a two-story frame house, which was something of a mansion in that part of Texas following the war.

While most of the emigrants found the flat, black lands excellent for cotton-growing and were raising handsome cash crops in cotton, John Shirley used his Texas prairie soil as he had used the hilly, timbered land of Missouri. He raised corn for corn pone, for roasting, for hominy and to feed his cattle. He raised hogs for meat, supplementing the larder with wild game from nearby Mesquite Creek and the Trinity River bottoms. Sorghum cane was grown for sugar and molasses. He got the cash he needed by raising and trading horses, and keeping a blooded stud to stand for a fee. In June, 1867, he paid $1,200 for some lots in Scyene, and announced his intention of opening a small hotel.

MEANWHILE, Myra attended the one-room community school, but rather irregularly. Having graduated from a female academy, she looked down on the other pupils. With her scathing tongue and quick temper, she was considered rather wild, and not too popular with the neighbors.

At home, she milked cows, helped wash dishes, made beds and hoed in the garden. For a girl who had once rambled the Missouri countryside at will with her brother, life became exceedingly slow-paced and dull. Her hobbies were an occasional horseback ride, practicing with her rifle and pistol, and collecting news from Missouri.

Quantrill had been shot to death in Kentucky toward the end of the war. Most of his lieutenants had come to a violent end one way or another. The general amnesty proclaimed for all pillagers, arsonists and murderers among the Federal guerrillas did not apply to Confederate guerrillas. They were subject to arrest, trial and punishment for crimes they were accused of having committed. Prevented from returning to peaceful pursuits, many had taken to cattle and horse thievery. Frank and Jesse James had joined the Younger Brothers and were now robbing banks and trains.

Southwestern Missouri had been almost completely devastated and most of Myra's childhood friends had scattered. Letters went unanswered. The Reed family had gone back to Rich Hill following the destruction of Carthage. After the death of Ed, Jim Reed, Myra's childhood sweetheart, had served in the Confederate Army of his own volition, without regular enlistment, joining Sidney G. Jackson's famous Sixteenth Regiment of Cavalry in 1864, and continuing until the close of the war. He made a good soldier. But there had been no word from him since he, with a remnant of the old guerrilla band, left in 1866 for the Indian Territory.

Then, one afternoon in the summer of '68, Reed suddenly appeared at the Shirley homestead for a visit, and life for Myra Maybelle became exciting again.

Reed was taller than Myra had remembered him—nearly six feet. His skin was tanned, almost leathery from exposure to the wind and sun. His sandy hair had turned a darker shade of brown. He wore long sideburns and a brownish mustache neatly trimmed. He swept off his broad-brimmed hat with a bow and a broad smile, and his steel-blue eyes, as they fell on Myra, glistened. Myra was now a buxom, black-haired, black-eyed lass of twenty, and Reed liked what he saw.

He stayed with the Shirleys a couple of weeks. He had delivered some horses from the Indian Territory, and had other business around Dallas, he claimed. John Shirley didn't like the attention he paid Myra, and wondered about the handful of twenty-dollar gold pieces he jangled.

Reed admitted that he had "made himself a piece of money" since the war, working for Old Tom Starr up in the Cherokee Nation; "figured to pick up some cheap cattle in Texas" and drive a herd up the trail on his own; "could go back to farmin'" with his brothers at Rich Hill, but that was "out of his line" now.

Old Tom Starr was a good man to work for, he added. He held a big chunk of wild, remote domain in the big bend of the Canadian River between Eufaula and Briartown, on the border of the Choctaw country. He and his clan had been given the land by treaty to keep the peace. His father, James Starr, a member of the Ridge, or Treaty, faction of the Cherokees, had been assassinated by the Ross faction in a dispute that had split the tribe in bitter, tragic civil strife long before the Civil War.

Tom and his brothers, Washington, Ellis, and James Jr., and their cousins, Ellis Starr, Suel Rider and Ellis West, had been outlawed by the tribal leaders, chiefs of the Ross faction whose government of the Nation had been recognized in Washington, and the Starrs had retaliated in revenge, relentless and without quarter. Tom had drawn first blood. His eight sons, Sam, Ellis, Cooper, Molsie, Tuxie, William, Jack and Washington, and two daughters had joined him, with all their in-laws and cousins, the Toneys, Phillipses, McClures, Mabrys and Wests. During the War Between the States, they had carried their fight against the Union forces, represented by the Ross faction. Tom had shown the Confederate guerrillas, even Quantrill, who was several times his guest, some tricks.

Since the war, he had never quite abandoned his personal hobby of slitting the throats of every Ross-faction Cherokee he could waylay on lonely roads. On the side he conducted a lively business in cattle, horses and whiskey. He had become so firmly entrenched in this section, surrounded by his numerous relatives and in-laws who were his bodyguards and intelligence service, that ex-Confederate guerrillas and new outlaws of the Reconstruction disorder had found his place a haven.

"Biggest man I ever saw," Reed told John Shirley. "Over six and a half feet tall, straight as an arrow, with long black hair and powerful muscles. Old Tom's really something!"

JOHN SHIRLEY didn't like this talk. Despite his sympathies, he didn't like what Reed was doing, and expressed his objections in no uncertain terms when Reed finally got around to asking him for his daughter's hand.

"I've always liked you, Jim," John Shirley said, "but I'll be damned if I'll give my daughter away to a man who, any day, might be caught with the wrong herd of horses or cattle and stretched on the end of a rope."

Myra was indignant. She and Reed took frequent moonlight rides together, and she boldly proclaimed she would go with him anywhere. There is some evidence that John Shirley went so far as to lock her in her room and run Reed off with a shotgun. When Myra threatened to elope, John Shirley took her to a seminary down in Parker County, where he left orders that she be kept under lock and key and allowed to communicate with no one outside the family. Reed waited in Dallas. With no word from Myra, nor learning where she was in hiding, he rode back to Missouri, wifeless and lonely.

A short time later, Myra wrote her mother that she was pregnant. If she didn't get to see Reed, she would let out the secret, scandal would sweep the countryside, and the family would be ostracized.

Again John Shirley fumed and paced the floor. Finally, he relented. Reed came after Myra, taking her to the parental roof at Rich Hill. They were married in Bates County, Missouri, and when John Shirley next heard from them he was a grandfather. In the spring of 1869, Myra gave birth to a baby girl named Pearl, whom the Reed family called Rosie Lee.

Apparently Myra spent the next few months of her career alone with Mother Reed. One aged Missouri woman remembered: "She used to come to the Bethel Baptist Church that I attended on Reed's Creek, near Rich Hill. She always came on horseback, with her child in her arms, riding side-saddle. What impressed me most was how devoted she was to her baby and the fine clothes she provided for her. Even during the sermon, she would look at the little girl instead of the preacher."

Jim was away most of the time. He raced horses on the tracks at Fort Smith, Arkansas, and engaged in enough escapades with the Starr clan to keep him in the Indian Territory. Myra always met him in secluded places away from Rich Hill and the prying eyes of neighbors and local officials, indulging in the intimacies of married life and helping count the loot he brought home each trip.

THEN THE Shannon boys, a group of demobilized bushwhackers, and neighbors of the Reeds, got on the trail of a feudist enemy named Pete Fisher and killed Scott Reed, Jim's brother, instead. It was a mistake, they said. Jim didn't think so, and shot the member of the Shannon family who had slain his brother, from ambush.

With a reward posted for his arrest for murder, he again took refuge at Tom Starr's. Even there he felt ill at ease. Although immune from arrest except by Federal marshals who policed the Indian Territory, he was still close to home and he knew the nature of the Shannons. He sent word for Myra to meet him with the baby at Tom Starr's, and from there, departed with his family to California.

Facts fade at this point, but it is generally agreed that the Reeds resided in Los Angeles until 1871. "This is the happiest period of my life," Myra wrote her mother. Years after, she could not speak of it without bitterness and regret.

How Reed made a living for his family in California is fairly clear. He was finally named as one of the participants in a stagecoach robbery near San Diego. Witnesses failed to identify him, but while he was free on bond, the officers learned of the warrant in Missouri. Before they could re-arrest him, he fled from the state on horseback.

Myra and the children departed by train and rejoined him in Texas. By this time, John Shirley had suffered a stroke and died. Mrs. Shirley sold the farm and moved into a three-room house in Scyene. The Reed children lived with her for a time.

Myra and Jim opened a livery stable in Scyene, managed a string of race horses, and did a good deal of trading. The price on Jim's head made it necessary for him to keep out of sight, so Myra attended to most of the business. She still had a good reputation in Texas, and many people minimized Jim's criminal record, regarding him as an ex-soldier persecuted by Yankees and carpetbaggers. Some of the best families in Dallas County concealed him in their homes. Too, most of the peace officers were either Confederate soldiers or former members of the same guerrilla outfits which had spawned Reed and the Jameses and the Youngers.

Still, Reed found it more and more difficult to keep in touch with his family. New rewards were posted for him in California. Dead or alive, he became an asset of great value to more and more people. He left Dallas, hiding on the prairies to the north, to be safer from old warrants and to facilitate his profitable trading in horses of doubtful title. A number of animals stolen in Indian Territory were doubtlessly disposed of through the otherwise apparently respectable Reed livery operation.

It is also alleged that, during this time, Myra, dressed as a man, as she was often wont to do, participated with Reed and two men named Dan Evans and D. C. Wilder in the robbery of a wealthy Creek Indian sub-chief named Watt Grayson. The Creek had appropriated tribal funds of over $30,000 in gold which he had hidden in the mountains during the Civil War, and afterwards hidden in his home near the Starr domain, on the Deep Fork of the Canadian. It is claimed that Jim and Myra, Evans

Sam. Belle's husband

and Wilder split $34,000 with Old Tom Starr, $12,000 of which was in worthless Confederate greenbacks.

Within three months, the quartet was together again, holding up the S. T. Scott and Company's stage between San Antonio and Austin. Myra was never officially connected with this crime. However, local and federal officers picked up the trail of Reed, Evans and Wilder. Wilder was slain by Deputy Marshals W. H. Anderson and T. M. Wright at Evans' home on Coon Creek in Bosque County. Evans escaped to the Indian Territory, where he murdered a man for his horse, boots and saddle. He was arrested and tried at Fort Smith, in the famous federal court of the "Hanging Judge" Isaac C. Parker, and died on the gallows.

On August 6, 1874, Deputy Sheriff John T. Morris shot and killed Reed in a farm house fifteen miles northwest of Paris, Texas. His body was interred in potter's field, unclaimed by either his wife or relatives.

MYRA expressed little grief over the death of her husband. She gathered up little Ed and Pearl and took them to the Reed relatives at Rich Hill, leaving Ed with his grandmother. From Missouri, she went to visit an old schoolmate in Conway, Arkansas, where she left little Pearl. Having got rid of her children, she returned to Texas, disposed of her properties at Scyene and entered the saloon life of Dallas which the fictionists, and some historians, have made so much of. In 1878 and 1879 they have her as the directing mind of as desperate a band of criminals as ever hijacked a gambling hall in Dodge City or raided a Texas cattle trail, and the object of a strange pair of admirers—a swarthy, half-breed Cherokee horse thief named Felix Griffin, and a dashing white man of fine physique and dark, handsome appearance, who affected a thin mustache and went under the appalling alias of "Blue Duck."

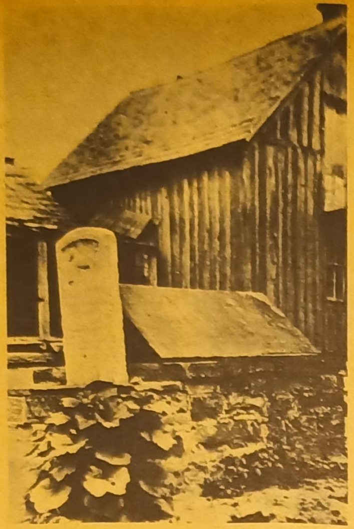
The better evidence is that, during this period, she lived in Galena, Kansas, a tough mining camp a few miles west of Joplin, Missouri, with a tinhorn gambler named Bruce Younger.

A retired mining man of Joplin recalled: "Galena was full of money. The boys in the mines used to run around with big rolls of bills in their pockets. There was a lot of fighting, robbing and killing. The biggest honky-tonk in town was the Round Top, and most of the saloons, dancehalls, whorehouses and gambling joints were on Redhot Street. She and Bruce Younger were well-known on Redhot Street. Bruce was a cousin of Cole Younger, the bank robber. He and Belle lived together in several places in Joplin, but mostly they stayed at the Evans Hotel in North Galena."

A former sheriff of Galena, Kansas, whose father owned the Evans Hotel at the time, remembered Myra very well indeed: "Her mother was there with her part of the time. Her daughter Pearl was there for a while, too. She was eight or nine years old, and sometimes went under the name of Pearl Younger."

This may account for the fact that Myra later referred to her daughter as Pearl "Younger" and gave the name to her last home on the banks of the Canadian.

Whatever the truth of her exploits during these years, by 1880 she was back in the Indian Territory, married to Sam Starr, the son of Old Tom. Cherokee Volume 1-B, page 297, Records of Marriages and Licenses, reveals the following:



Belle Starr's grave at Younger's Bend.

Starr & Reed

On the 5th day of June, 1880, by Abe Woodall, District Judge for Canadian Dist., C. N. Samuel Starr, a citizen of Cherokee Nation, age 23 years and Mrs. Belle Reed, a citizen of United States, age 27 years.

H. J. Vann, Clerk.

Exercising a woman's perogative, Belle came out of the ceremony five years younger than she was. But little Pearl and Ed had a new and unusual parent and Belle had the name of Starr, the appellation by which she is best known to posterity.

Sam had 62 acres of land on the north side of the bend of the Canadian near Briartown. To the north rose Hi-Early Mountain, a peak with boulder-guarded caves. The only approach was over a narrow canyon trail. Belle named the place Younger's Bend. It became the new headquarters for her activities and a refuge for notorious badmen from every state bordering Indian Territory.

Her operations were so smooth and her stronghold so inaccessible that she did not trip up with the law until 1882, when she was arrested by deputy United States marshals on a horse-stealing charge. She was taken to Fort Smith to face Judge Parker.

Her trial began February 15, 1883. It lasted four days and she became a national sensation. Eastern journalists and newspapermen headlined her as "Queen of the Bandits," "The Lady Desperado," and "Petticoat Terror of the Plains." She was convicted on two counts, Sam on one. The lady was sentenced to two six-month terms and Sam to a full year in the House of Correction at Detroit.

IN NINE months they were back at Younger's Bend. During their stay in prison, Belle's affections for Sam had cooled somewhat and she became enamored with the member of their old gang, Blue Duck. But just when everything was going well, Blue Duck went on a drunken spree in the Flint District of the Cherokee Nation and shot and killed a young farmer named Samuel Wyrick. He was arrested by the marshals, tried for murder at Fort Smith, and sentenced to the gallows.

Belle, lining up the best legal talent she could afford, managed to save his rascally neck. His sentence was commuted to life imprisonment at Menard, Illinois. Belle never saw Blue Duck again, but Sam objected vigorously to her efforts in his behalf. It made no difference to Belle.

A new fugitive had arrived at the hideout. His name was John Middleton, a cousin of Jim Reed's. Middleton was wanted for larceny and arson in Arkansas and in Texas for the murder of Sheriff J. H. Black, of Lamar County.

Sam and Felix Griffin held up the Creek Nation treasury. Griffin was captured, and the country became so hot for Sam that he was forced to remain on the scout. With Sam away, Belle's affections centered on Middleton. There were so many officers in the Younger's Bend area, Middleton feared for his own safety and decided to return to Arkansas. Belle agreed to accompany him and "give Sam the slip."

They started, each on a separate route, to meet at Dardanelle. But Middleton never reached his destination. He was found a few days later, his horse, still saddled and bridled, tangled in the brush on the banks of the Poteau River in the Choctaw Nation, his body, the face blown away with a shotgun, washed up on the bank and half-buried in mud.

Belle returned to Younger's Bend. Whether she gave Sam an excuse for her actions is not known. She never had to. A week before Christmas, in 1886, Sam was killed in a brawl at a dance near Whitefield by a man named Frank West.

With Sam's death, things quieted down at Younger's Bend. But trouble continued to pile up on Belle. First, the Starr family was opposed to her claiming the land at the Bend as Sam's legitimate wife. This marriage, they maintained, was not according to Cherokee law.

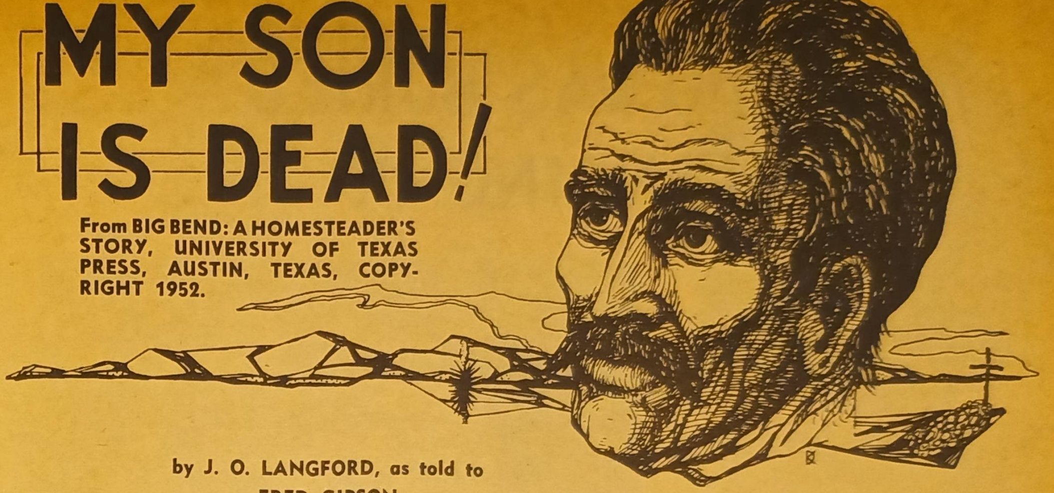
Belle quickly solved this problem. Old Tom had a nephew named Jim July. He was a tall, well-formed buck, educated in Indian schools, and could speak the language of nearly all the tribes fluently. He wasn't as handsome as Sam, but at thirty-nine, Belle was no longer a beauty herself. Her face was almost mannish now, her dark eyes hard and piercing, and her black hair streaked with gray. Yet there was an aura of sensuality about her that aroused the sex hunger in young July. Early in 1888, he moved in with Belle and announced to all friends and neighbors that they were "married."

Belle's second problem was her daughter and son. Pearl and Ed, now grown, had come to live with their mother in her log cabin under Hi-Early Mountain, and readily took up with the wild associates they found there. In April, 1887, Pearl had given birth to an illegitimate daughter in Siloam Springs, where Belle had sent her, telling her she never wanted to see the child. Pearl left the child in Arkansas and returned to Younger's Bend, refusing to disclose the name of its father. Finally she married a prominent businessman and reared a respectable family.

ED, A HUSKY, dapper youth cultivating a thin mustache, exhibited all the characteristics of his father, and under the tutelage of Sam Starr, had gained a liberal education in scouting. He became involved in several minor outrages. In

(Continued on page 56)

MY SON IS DEAD!



From BIG BEND: A HOMESTEADER'S STORY, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS, AUSTIN, TEXAS, COPYRIGHT 1952.

by J. O. LANGFORD, as told to
FRED GIPSON

Illustrated by Dwain Kelley

A TRAVELER from San Vicente brought me the sad news. My friend Gregorio Marufo had lost his son.

The traveler was philosophical. He pointed out that in the village of San Vicente, in the Big Bend country of Texas, Gregorio was a man of importance. He lived in a fine rock house of two rooms. He owned a big farm. He owned many goats. He owned many chickens. Almost never was he without a pig fattening in the sty he'd dug into the ground near his house.

But disease had struck down Gregorio's strong husky son the same as if he'd never had enough to eat. It had shut off his water, so that he could not urinate; and he'd swelled and swelled until he could no longer bear the pain.

And now, my informant concluded, the boy was just as dead as if he had been the son of a poor man.

That evening I walked to San Vicente to attend the funeral. I arrived a bit late, so that most of the people from San Vicente were already there. They stood silent, with eyes downcast, as I walked through them toward the house.

The corpse was laid out on a bench under the brush arbor in front of Gregorio's house. There was a white cotton sheet on the bench, then one spread over the body. Around the corpse were dozens of slow burning candles of goat tallow.

I walked past the body, and extended my hand to Gregorio, who came to meet me at the door. My friend shed no tears as he looked at me, but deep in his eyes I could see a flood of them held in check. At the proper time they would flow; that was plain by the sorrow and despair that showed in the deep lines of his weathered face.

He took my hand and said: "*Senor*, my son is dead," then turned from me and went back into the house.

I left the door to stand silently among the others till the village *jefe*, Comillo Celaya, arrived with a pistol in his hand. Now the funeral procession was ready to start.

Adolfo Yarte, Ysidro Sanchez, Juan Gamboa, and Fermin Salas, close friends of my friend Gregorio, were the bearers. They came with a litter, made of cottonwood poles and a woolen blanket, and laid it on the ground beside the corpse. Gently, they lifted the stiffened body, still covered by the sheet, and placed it upon the litter. Then, one at each of the four corners, they lifted the litter to their shoulders and stood waiting.

OUTSIDE, the *jefe* raised his revolver till the muzzle pointed skyward toward the brilliant afterglow of the setting sun, and squeezed the trigger.

The short flat report was a shocking sound in the vast silence of the Rio Grande Valley.

The litter bearers moved out. Behind them, a long double queue formed, the immediate family coming first, close friends next, then neighbors and acquaintances. Last came the *jefe* with the gun in his hand. Together, in solemn procession, we moved toward the *camp santo*, the sainted field, where the grave had already been dug.

There was no talk, even in whispers. There were no cries of anguish, no lamentations. Even the scrape and shuffle of our feet on the loose gravelly soil seemed muted in the presence of death.

Crashing into this hushed quietness came the report of the pistol again. I felt my nerves tighten. Ahead of me, I saw some of my friends flinch, almost as if the bullet had struck them. But that was all. They uttered no sound. The echoes of the report ran shouting across the wide valley and quickly lost themselves in the surrounding hills and arroyos. Then the silence was more intense than ever.

Six times, at regular intervals, in that half-mile trip, the gun was fired; the last time, just as the litter-bearers reached the grave. Then the line broke and the mourners came to stand quietly around the gaping hole and the mound of raw earth beside it.

There were no hymns sung, no prayers uttered. There was no weeping no suppressed sobs of grief. Just silence.

Four men slid into the open grave to receive the litter from the bearers. Carefully, they lowered the sheet-wrapped body to its resting place. They removed the litter, handed it up, placed a board across the head of the dead boy, then climbed out of the grave.

Gregorio Marufo, as head of the bereaved family, moved to the mound of loose soil, caught up a handful, and sifted it through his fingers over the body of his son. He moved aside. His wife caught up a handful of the soil and spilled it gently into the grave as she moved along, making room for the others of her family.

One by one, each relative, friend, and neighbor walked past the grave and performed this last rite. Then we stood back while four men shoveled dirt into the grave.

IT was possibly one-third full when one of the workmen nodded to the others, then all stood back. Juan Ochoa, the biggest and strongest man in the village, came forward. He stepped down into the grave and reached for a round boulder that rested at the brink of the opening. The boulder was huge, and of such great weight that it seemed impossible that even Juan Ochoa could lift it. But lift it he did, higher than his head, then let it drop into the loose soil at his feet.

He bent and lifted it and let it drop again, time after time, each time in a new place. Sweat broke out on his swarthy face and ran down his cheeks. The great muscles of his shoulders began to tremble and quiver from the strain of his efforts. But he never stopped until the boulder had been dropped on every square inch of loose soil in the grave, packing it tightly around the body of Gregorio's son.

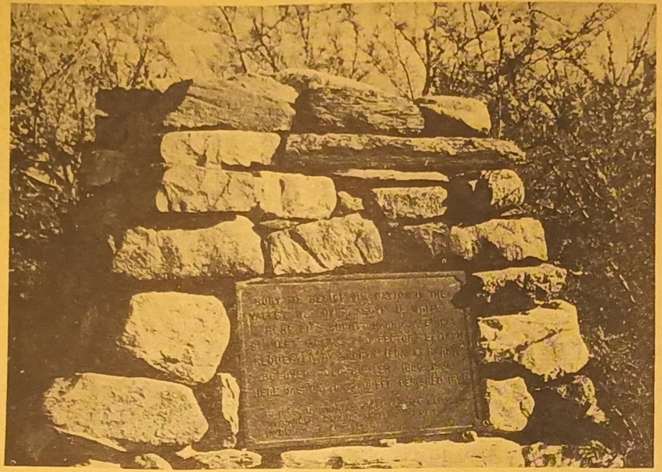
(Continued on page 50)

Gregorio owned a big farm and he lived in a big rock house, but when the disease struck his son, it killed the boy just as dead as if he had been the son of a poor man

The Man WHO WAS BURIED STANDING UP

by BOB and JAN YOUNG

Shorty Harris arrived in California with General Grant, discovered millions in gold, died penniless and was buried standing up!



"Bury me beside Jim Dayton in the valley we loved. Above me write: 'Here lies Shorty Harris, a single blanket jackass prospector.'—Epitaph requested by Shorty (Frank) Harris, beloved gold hunter. 1856-1934. Here Jas. Dayton, pioneer, perished 1898. To these trailmakers whose courage matched the dangers of the land, this bit of earth is dedicated forever."

Grave is located at the mouth of Hanaupah Canyon in Death Valley, 280 ft. below sea level. Two of the dates on the plaque are wrong: Harris was born in 1857, and Dayton died in 1899.

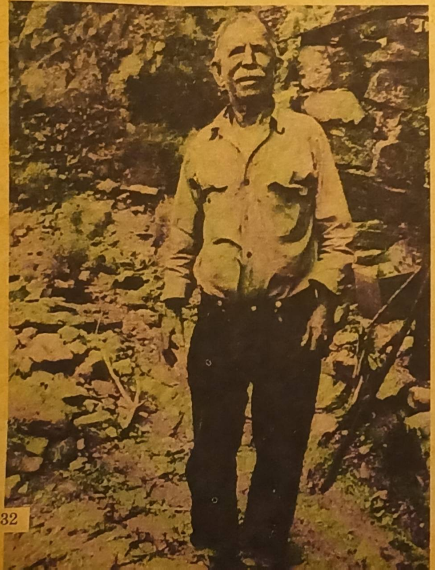
SWEAT streamed down the handsome features of Miss Bessie Hart, blacksmith of Ballarat, California, as she honed a keen point on the miner's pick.

She might have been sharpening Cupid's tools, too, thought Shorty Harris as he gazed admiringly on her 6 foot, 210 pound bulk, watching her muscles ripple as she bellowed the forge fire.

"I bin thinkin', Miss Bessie," Shorty said abruptly. "How's about you and me getting married?"

The desert Juno looked down on Shorty—a full foot shorter and a hundred pounds lighter. Her hands slid to ample hips. "Short-man, you're a mighty nice chum to have around," she said gently, "but it 'pears to me like you're just too little for the job."

Resignedly, Shorty gathered up gear and his "boorows" and returned to his first love —prospecting in Death Valley. "I should'a knowed women wasn't for me. The short man's never bin nuthing but a single-blanket jackass prospector," he mourned to himself.



The fabulous Shorty Harris. Frasher's Photo, Pomona, Calif.

But Shorty's appraisal was modest indeed, for Frank Harris is still legend in Death Valley, where enigma is the rule. A man who arrived in California with General Grant, discovered numerous gold mines, then died and was buried standing up—that was Shorty Harris.

Wherever tall tales and mystery prevail, historians disagree, but it seems Shorty was born near Providence, R. I., in July, 1857. Orphaned seven years later, he worked in the cotton mills until he was 14, then took off, riding westward.

Not liking the stink of cowhides at Dodge City, he left that town. At Puma, he spotted the Presidential Special, carrying U. S. Grant and his Fred. Never particularly impressed with dignitaries, Shorty mooched $7 from Fred Grant, then ate dust of the roadbed the rest of the way, as the train chuffed into Los Angeles—Shorty below, the President above.

Leadville, Colorado, beckoned the short-man next. It was there he learned the ways of gold. With two prospecting partners, Shorty cut his first score of $7,500. The bars and bagnios rocked for weeks.

The strike later produced millions of dollars, but Shorty was satisfied to take a little cash and let the credit go.

COEUR d'Alene, Tombstone, and Silver Peak all interested Shorty briefly. But he was down to cases when he again hit California. A job peeling spuds was keeping him from coming apart, when he struck up his friendship with John Lambert.

"Yessiree, John," Shorty remarked, waving a hand toward the Panamint Mountains and Death Valley, "I'll hit another big 'un 'fore long. The short-man can do it." Shorty paused, then suddenly asked if Lambert would "borrow" him some tools and a burro.

Lambert agreed but decided to go along, just to keep an eye on his grub-stake. Before dark that day, March 17, 1832, they'd spotted a terrific vein of gold. The first 15 pounds of crushed ore showed $300 in values.

"Luck of the Irish!" Shorty shouted. "This'll be the St. Patrick's Day mine." Setting their claim monuments, Shorty couldn't light out for Ballarat fast enough. He was dry as a covered bridge.

"It takes the short-man to do it," he bragged as he lounged against the bar. A crowd was there to hear Shorty talk, as they always did when he was flush. Shorty drank and Shorty babbled, and the rush was on. Shorty cashed out his share for $7,000. Lambert, a mite more astute, got more than $100,000 for his.

Shorty laughed it off. He pounded nails around the top of the whiskey casks, hung tin cups on them. Ballarat rocked. It was Shorty this, and Shorty that. While his poke lasted he had more following than a Salvation Army captain.

Seven weeks, seven grand!

Broke, at last, but still as confident as a Georgia democrat on election eve, Shorty wandered off towards Death Valley, this time with Jim Dayton, beside whom he is buried today. And they hit it rich, too—not as rich as the first two, but enough of a showing that Shorty asked $15,000 for his share.

A Nevada mining man said he'd take the offer back to his company for consideration. Shorty was dismayed at the delay. For days and weeks Shorty heard nothing. He grew thirstier all the time. Finally, he located the mining official and tearfully explained his situation.

"I just got word me mother is dying, and my aunt has been took awful sick," Shorty pleaded. "I'll sacrifice that claim for less'n what I bin asking."

The engineer raised cash-cold eyebrows. "How much?"

"Uh," Shorty hesitated gracefully. "$1500, 'stead of the $15,000."

Surprised but still interested, the engineer closed the deal a few minutes later for $1,000.

Shorty Harris always had this shack to come home to. He also lived in an abandoned school house located nearby. Both are in Ballarat, California, supply center of the Death Valley area.

"That was more'n I expected anyhow," Shorty explained. "But you gotta start asking somewhere."

Shorty was convinced now that he couldn't be beaten. It almost seemed that he was right. There was the World Beater, and the one in the Gold Belt, and Shorty was really rolling. He was even flush enough to take a trip into Los Angeles and have all of his front teeth gold-plated. It was a stiff-tab all right — $500. But it certainly gave him a golden smile, to grace his features, once described as handsome as a Mexican sheep's.

ONLY once did Shorty moan about a venture. He spotted some likely-looking ore near where Greenwater was later located. Samples and location notices in hand, he hit off for Ballarat. There he met Jud Decker, who said he was on his way to Independence, seat of the Inyo County Recorder's. Shorty handed Jud his notices to be filed, then forgot the matter.

Jud, a kindred spirit, apparently, got a load of bust-head before he got into town, and forgot his errand. Shorty, fully confident he was protected, was again telling one and all of the new location. A minor rush started. When Shorty followed a few days later, he found all of the claims taken, and no way to prove his prior claim.

"Jud Decker's drunk cost me a million dollars," he wailed as he wiped away drops of whiskey from his mustache. "But there's always another canyon."

That other canyon may have been one of those tortuous gorges between Skidoo and the floor of Death Valley. Drier than a scorched tumbleweed, Shorty

(Continued on page 42)

Ballarat, California, as it appears today. Long the home and operation center for Shorty Harris, it was never a boom camp but rather a supply base for Panamint and other more muscular boom camps. Also, it was the home of Miss Bessie Hart, blacksmith. Famed Panamint Mountains in the rear.

LONGROPE'S LAST GUARD

by
CHARLES M. RUSSELL

Deathly quiet hung over the great herd. Utter blackness pressed in. Suddenly, the storm broke—and seventeen hundred longhorns were running madly. Still, I had no way of knowing that this was to be . . .

Editor's Note:

Don't miss this classic of trail drive danger because it gets off to a "slow" start. How many of you will ever have a chance to learn the inside workings of an old trail drive crew? You'll get a pretty good picture of it in the first two thousand words of this story.

WHOEVER told you that cattle stampede without cause was talkin' like a shorthorn," says Rawhide Rawlins. "You can bet all you got that whenever cattle run, there's a reason for it. A whole lot of times cattle run, an' nobody knows why but the cows an' they won't tell.

"There's plenty of humans call it instinct when an animal does something they don't savvy. I don't know what it is myself, but I've seen the time when I'd like to a-had some. I've knowed of hosses bein' trailed a thousand miles an' turned loose, that pulled back for their home range, not goin' the trail they come, but takin' cut-offs across mountain ranges that would puzzle a bighorn. An' if you'd ask one of these wise boys how they done it, he'd back out of it easy by sayin' it's instinct. You'll find cow ponies that knows more about the business than the men that rides 'em.

"There's plenty of causes for a stampede; sometimes it's a green hand or a careless cowpuncher scratchin' a match to light a cigarette. Maybe it's something on the wind, or a tired night-hoss spraddles and shakes himself, an' the poppin' of the saddle leather causes them to jump the bed-ground. Scare a herd on the start, and you're liable to have hell with them all the way. I've seen bunches well trail-broke that you couldn't fog off the bed-ground with a slicker an' six-shooter; others, again, that had had a scare, you'd have to ride a hundred yards away from to spit. Some men's too careful with their herd an' go tiptoein' around like a mother with a sick kid. I've had some experience, an' claim this won't do. Break 'em so they'll stand noise; get 'em used to seein' a man afoot, an' you'll have less trouble.

"There's some herds that you dassen't quit your hoss short of five hundred yards of. Of course it's natural enough for cow-brutes that never see hoss an' man apart to scare some when they see 'em separate. They think the top of this animal's busted off, an' when they see the piece go movin' around they're plenty surprised; but as I said before, there's many reasons for stampedes unknown to man. I've seen herds start in broad daylight with no cause that anybody knows of. The smell of blood will start 'em goin'; this generally comes off in the mornin' when they're quittin' the bed-ground. Now, in every herd you'll find steers that's regular old rounders. They won't go to bed like decent folks, but put in the night pursuin' around, disturbin' the peace. If there's any bulls in the bunch, there's liable to be fightin'. I've often watched an old bull walkin' around through the herd an' talkin' fight, hangin' up his bluff, with a bunch of these rounders at his heels. They're sure backin' him up—boostin' an' ribbin' up trouble, an' if there's a fight pulled off you should hear these trouble-builders takin' sides; every one of 'em with his tongue out an' his tail kinked, buckin' an' bellerin', like his money's all up. These night ramblers that won't go to bed at decent hours, after raisin' hell all night, are ready to bed down an' are sleepin' like drunks when decent cattle are walkin' off the bed-ground.

NOW, you know, when a cow-brute quits his bed he bows his neck, gapes an' stretches all the same as a human after a night's rest. Maybe he accidentally tromps on one of these rounders' tails that's layin' along the ground. This hurts plenty, and Mr. Night Rambler ain't slow about wakin' up; he raises like he's overslept an's afeared he'll miss the coach, leavin' the tossel of his tail under the other fellow's hoof. He goes off wringin' his stub an' scatterin' blood on his rump an' quarters. Now the minute them other cattle winds the blood, the ball opens. Every hoof's at his heels barkin' and bellerin'. Them that's close enough are hornin' him in the flank like they'd stuck to finish him off. They're all plumb hog-wild, an' if you want any beef left in your herd you'd better cut out the one that's causin' the excitement, 'cause an hour of this will take off more taller than they'll put on in a month.

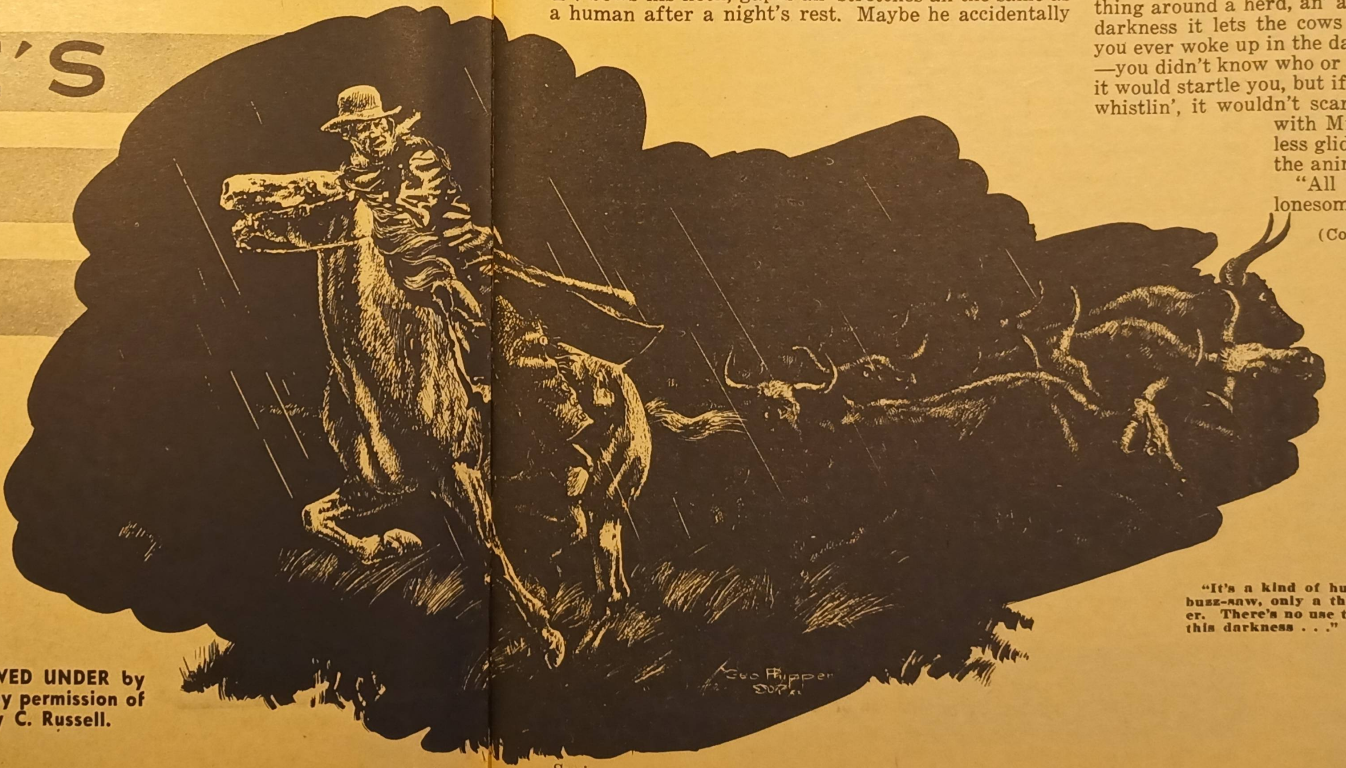
"Cattle like open country to sleep in. I sure hate to hold a herd near any brakes or deep 'royos, 'cause no matter how gentle a herd is, let a coyote or any other animal loom up of a sudden close to 'em an' they don't stop to take a second look, but are gone like a flash in the pan. Old bulls comin' up without talkin' sometimes jump a herd this way, an' it pays a cowpuncher to sing when he's comin' up out of a 'royo close to the bed-ground.

"Some folks'll tell you that cowboys sing their cows to sleep, but that's a mistake, judgin' from my experience, an' I've had some. The songs an' voices I've heard around cattle ain't soothin'. A cowpuncher sings to keep himself company; it ain't that he's got any motherly love for these longhorns he's put to bed an' 's ridin' herd on; he's amusin' himself an' nobody else. These ditties are generally shy on melody an' strong on noise. Put a man alone in the dark, an' if his conscience is clear an' he ain't hidin' he'll sing an' don't need to be a born vocalist. Of course singin's a good thing around a herd, an' all punchers know it. In the darkness it lets the cows know where you're at. If you ever woke up in the darkness an' found somebody —you didn't know who or what—loomin' up over you, it would startle you, but if this somebody is singin' or whistlin', it wouldn't scare you none. It's the same with Mr. Steer; that snaky, noiseless glidin' up on him's what scares the animal.

"All herds has some of these lonesomes that won't lie down with

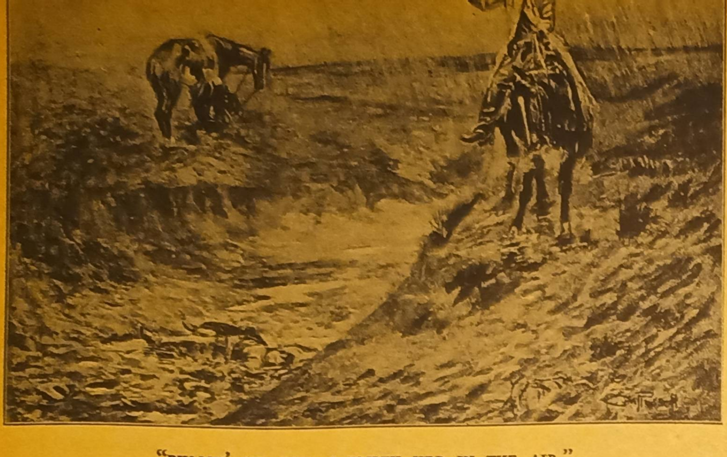
(Continued on following page)

Drawing by Geo. Phippen



"It's a kind of hummin' noise like a buzz-saw, only a thousand times louder. There's no use tryin' to turn 'em in this darkness . . ."

From TRAILS PLOWED UNDER by Charles M. Russell by permission of the Estate of Nancy C. Russell.



"PULLIN' MY GUN, I EMPTY HER IN THE AIR."

the other cattle, but beds down alone maybe twenty-five to thirty yards from the edge of the herd. He's got his own reason for this; might be he's short an eye. This bein' the case you can lay all you got he's layin' with the good blinker next to the herd. He don't figure on lettin' none of his playful brothers beef his ribs from a sneak. One-eyed hoss is the same. Day or night you'll find him on the outside with his good eye watchin' the bunch. Like Mister Steer, the confidence he's got in his brother's mighty frail.

"But these lonesome cattle I started to tell you about, is the ones that a puncher's most liable to run onto in the dark, layin' out that way from the herd. If you ride onto him singin', it don't startle Mr. Steer; he raises easy, holdin' his ground till you pass; then he lays down in the same place. He's got the ground warm an' hates to quit her. Cows, the same as humans, like warm beds. Many's the time in cool weather I've seen some evil-minded, low-down steer stand around like he ain't goin' to bed, but all the time he's got his eye on some poor, undersized brother layin' near by, all innocent. As soon as he thinks the ground's warm, he walks over, horns him out an' jumps his claim. This low-down trick is sometimes practiced by punchers when they got a gentle herd. It don't hurt a cowpuncher's conscience none to sleep in a bed he stole from a steer.

"If you ride sneakin' an' noiseless onto one of these lonesome fellers, he gets right to his feet with dew-claws an' hoofs rattlin', an' 's runnin' before he's half up, hittin' the herd like a canned dog, an' quicker than you can bat an eye the whole herd's gone. Cows are slow animals, but scare 'em an' they're fast enough; a thousand will get to their feet as quick as one. It's sure a puzzler to cowmen to know how a herd will all scare at once, an' every animal will get on his feet at the same time. I've seen herds do what a cowpuncher would call 'jump' — that is, to raise an' not run. I've been lookin' across a herd in bright moonlight — a thousand head or more, all down; with no known cause there's a short, quick rumble, an' every hoof's standin'.

"I've read of stampedes that were sure dangerous an' scary, where a herd would run through a camp, upsettin' wagons an' trompin' sleepin' cowpunchers to death. When day broke they'd be fifty or a hundred miles from where they started, leavin' a trail strewn with blood, dead cowpunchers, an' hosses, that looked like the work of a Kansas cyclone. This is all right in books, but the feller that writes 'em is romancin' an' don't savvy the cow. Most stampedes is noisy, but harmless to anybody but the cattle. A herd in a bad storm might drift thirty miles in a night, but the worst run I ever see, we ain't four miles from the bed-ground when the day broke.

THIS was down in Kansas; we're trailin' beef an' have got about seventeen hundred head. Barrin' a few dry ones the herd's straight steers, mostly Spanish longhorns from down on the Cimarron. We're about fifty miles south of Dodge. Our herd's well broke an' lookin' fine, an' the cowpunchers all good-natured, thinkin' of the good time comin' in Dodge.

"That evenin' when we're ropin' our hosses for night guard, the trail boss, 'Old Spanish' we call him—he ain't no real Spaniard, but he's rode some in Old Mexico an' can talk some Spanish — says to me: 'Them cattle ought to hold well; they ain't been off water four hours, an' we grazed 'em plumb onto the bed-ground. Every hoof of 'em's got a paunch full of grass an' water, an' that's what makes cattle lay good.'

"Me an' a feller called Longrope's on first guard. He's a centerfire or single-cinch man from California; packs a sixty-foot rawhide riata, an' when he takes her down an' runs about half of her into a loop she looks big, but when it reaches the animal, comes pretty near fittin' hoof or horn. I never went much on these longrope boys, but this man comes as near puttin' his loop where he wants as any I ever see. You know Texas men ain't got much love for a single rig, an' many's the argument me an' Longrope has on this subject. He claims a center-fire is the only saddle, but I 'low that they'll do all right on a shad-bellied western hoss, but for Spanish pot-gutted ponies they're no good. You're ridin' up on his withers all the time.

"When we reach the bed-ground, most of the cattle's already down, lookin' comfortable. They're bedded in open country, an' things look good for an easy night. It's been mighty hot all day, but there's

ant; but down the west I notice some nasty-lookin' clouds hangin' 'round the new moon that's got one horn hooked over the skyline. The storm's so far off that you can just hear her rumble, but she's walkin' up on us slow, an' I'm hopin' she'll go 'round. The cattle's all layin' quiet an' nice, so me an' Longrope stop to talk awhile.

" 'They're layin' quiet,' says I.

" 'Too damn quiet,' says he. 'I like cows to lay still all right, but I want some of the natural noises that goes with a herd this size. I want to hear 'em blowin' off, an' the creakin' of their joints, showin' they're easin' themselves in their beds. Listen, an' if you hear anything I'll eat that rimfire saddle of yours — grass rope an' all.'

"I didn't notice till then, but when I straighten my ears it's quiet as a grave. An' if it ain't for the lightnin' showin' the herd once in a while, I couldn't a-believed that seventeen hundred head of longhorns lay within forty feet of where I'm sittin' on my hoss. It's gettin' darker every minute, an' if it wasn't for Longrope's slicker I couldn't a-made him out, though he's so close I could have touched him with my hand. Finally it darkens up so I can't see him at all. It's black as a nigger's pocket; you couldn't find your nose with both hands.

"I remember askin' Longrope the time.

" 'I guess I'll have to get help to find the timepiece,' says he, but gets her after feelin' over himself, an' holdin' her under his cigarette takes a long draw, lightin' up her face.

" 'Half-past nine,' says he.

" 'Half an hour more,' I says. 'Are you goin' to wake up the next guard, or did you leave it to the hoss-wrangler?'

" 'There won't be but one guard tonight,' he answers, 'an' we'll ride it. You might as well hunt for a hoss thief in heaven as look for that camp. Well, I guess I'll mosey round.' An' with that he quits me.

THE lightnin's playin' every little while. It ain't making much noise, but lights up enough to show where you're at. There ain't no use ridin'; by the flashes I can see that every head's down. For a second it'll be like broad day, then darker than the dungeons of hell, an' I notice the little fire-balls on my hoss's ears; when I spit there's a streak in the air like strikin' a wet match. These little fire-balls is all I can see of my hoss, an' they tell me he's listenin' all ways; his ears are never still.

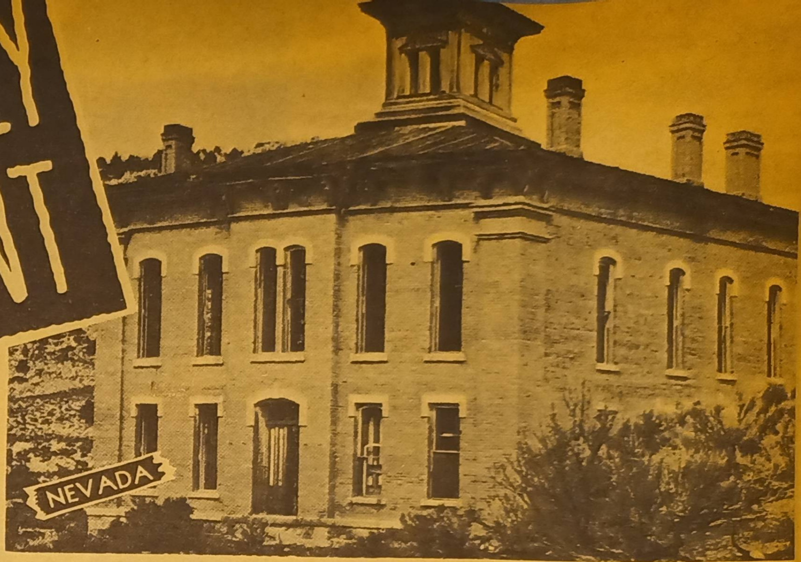
"I tell you, there's something mighty ghostly about sittin' up on a hoss you can't see, with them two little blue sparks out in front of you wigglin' an' movin' like a pair of spook eyes, an' it shows me the old night hoss is usin' his listeners pretty plenty. I got my ears cocked, too, hearin' nothin' but Longrope's singin'; he's easy three hundred yards across the herd from me, but I can hear every word:

"Sam Bass was born in Injiana,
It was his native home,
'Twas at the age of seventeen
Young Sam began to roam.
He first went out to Texas,
A cowboy for to be;
A better hearted feller
You'd seldom ever see.

"It's so plain it sounds like he's singin' in my ear; I can even hear the click-clack of his spur chains against his stirrups when he moves 'round. An' the cricket in his bit—he's usin' one of them hollow

(Continued on page 49)

GHOSTLY BELMONT



Old Nye County courthouse in ghosttown of Belmont, Nevada. Brick used in this building was ox-freighted over the Sierra Nevadas from Sacramento, California.

By NELL MURBARGER

Ghosttown! The word itself holds a certain fascination. This is one in a series of famous old ghosttowns of the West

---

GHOST TOWN

By
Edythe Hope Genee

Lingering shafts of a parching desert sun
Cast eerie shadows on the crumbling walls;
An air of brooding stillness hovers close,
Unbroken by sound or voice of man;
A door bangs loosely on a rusty hinge,
As dusk creeps forward through the purple sage,
And high Sierras, etched in saffron mist,
Press nearer to the moldy parapets.

O song of ages past—is this the clay
That once was Angels Camp and proud Belmont?
When wine flowed free—when lips and laughing eyes
Flashed through these dusty desert corridors?
Where are they now—the feet that walked these streets?
Do paths of gold still lure them farther on,
Or stay their steps beneath the burning sky,
To a muted silence in this painted sand?

TUCKED into remote mountain ranges of the West are hundreds of deserted mining camps. Some of them were fantastically rich. Others never expanded beyond a single dusty street fringed with sagging hitchrails and tar-papered shacks. These old ghost towns stand unique in our nation's development. The world had never known such cities before, and their like will never come again.

While Belmont, Nevada, never attained the international notoriety of Virginia City, Tombstone or Deadwood, it was a great old camp. She was rich and reckless; she had verve and vigor.

Gazing today upon her crumbled ruins and age-mellowed stone walls, it is difficult to realize that, in this setting of sagebrush and juniper, sleeps one of Nevada's first cities.

With the fabulous strike on Sun Mountain (still a main topic of conversation wherever mining men congregated) there fanned out over Nevada's desert a vast army of prospectors, every man hoping to locate a second Comstock.

As a result of this treasure-mad hegira, an important strike was made on the east slope of the Toquima Mountains in 1863, and the town of Belmont developed with a bang. From a lone prospector's tent her population skyrocketed almost overnight to 6,000 persons. Within two years she was casting covetous eyes upon the Nye county seat, then situated in the mining camp of Ione, 50 airline miles away.

The territory governed from Ione was larger than several Eastern states combined, Nye county's domain then spreading from the California border on the west to Utah Territory on the east and to Arizona Territory on the south. To the north, only one county separated it from Idaho. It was potentially rich in mineral wealth.

As a result of pressure brought on by Belmont, the state legislature in 1867 acceded to her demands. Over the vehement protests of Ione, the county seat was given to the new town.

Having just financed a new courthouse at Ione, taxpayers of Nye county were not enthusiastic about starting the immediate construction of a second new edifice at Belmont. So county offices were shunted from one store building to another. Not until 1874 was the erection of a new courthouse begun.

At Belmont's high elevation the working season is comparatively short, and two years had passed before the building was ready for dedication.

Standing foursquare to the mountain winds, proud Belmont saw the structure as a fit memorial to those indomitable men who had settled in this remote section more than a decade before. Two stories in height and surmounted by a well-proportioned dome, it was built of expertly-laid brick hauled laboriously by freight teams over the Sierras from Sacramento, California.

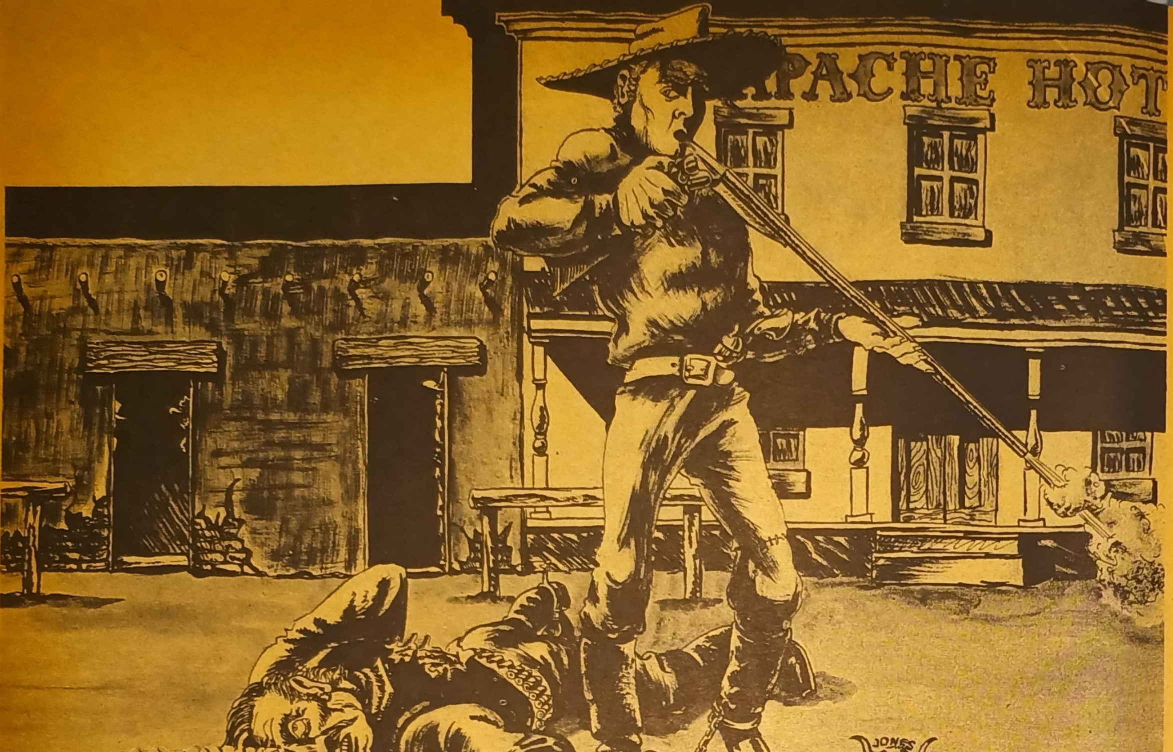
Occupying a considerable portion of the new building's ground floor was a formidable jail which offered distinct advantages over the crackerbox-type structure previously employed as a calaboose. Not only had the old jail figured in several spectacular escapes, but prisoners domiciled in it were afforded practically no protection from mob violence.

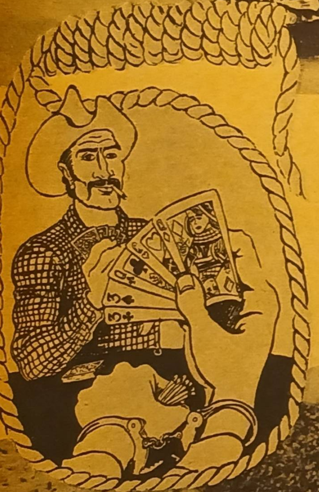
Among the more notable episodes in which the temporary jail had figured was the escape and subsequent lynching of Charlie McIntyre and Jack Walker, a couple of Pennsylvania coal miners.

Soon after their arrival, the pair got in an argument with H. H. Sutherland, a local citizen. The discussion

(Continued on page 52)

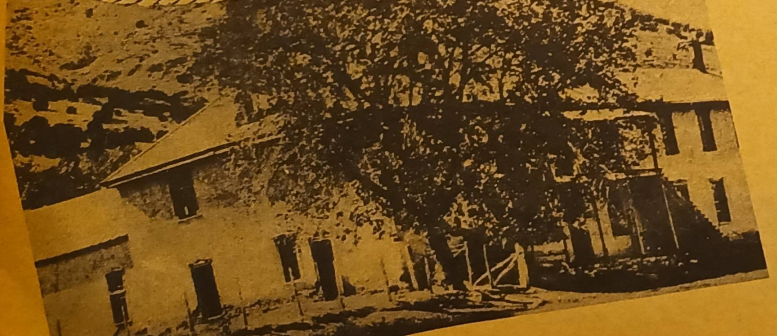
The old Cosmopolitan Music Hall. In the '60's and '70's, Fay Templeton and other celebrated thespians played here.

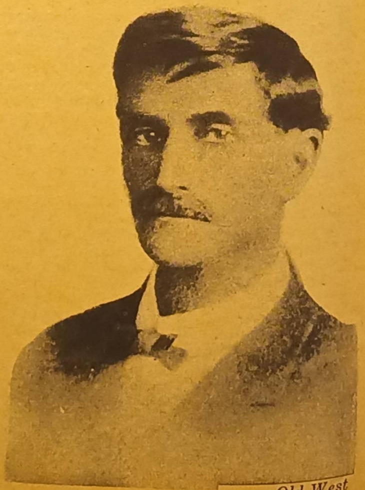




Drawings by James T. Jones

Top: This was the Kid's great moment and he gloried in each split-second of it. Lower left: Old county jail and court house, at Lincoln, New Mexico. Tree hides window from which the Kid shot and killed Bob Ollinger as he came down the street. Deputy Jim Bell got his in the rear of this building. Bottom: Pat Garrett, famous sheriff, who killed Billy the Kid.

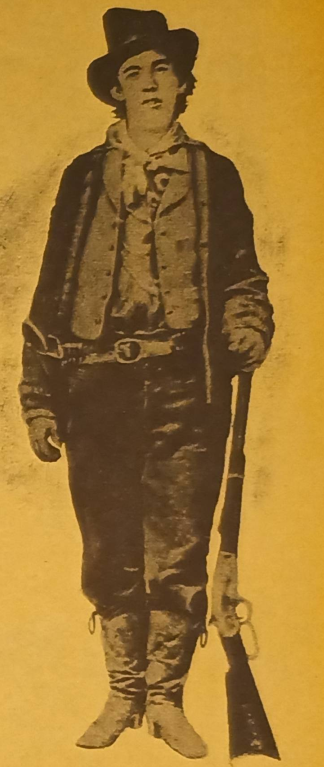




He was awaiting the hangman's noose in Lincoln, New Mexico, this youngster, Bill Bonney—"Billy the Kid." He had 15 days to go when the deputy dealt that last hand of cards, and the Kid proved again that he was one . . .

hellacious young hellion

by JEFF ADAMS



William H. Bonney, alias "Billy the Kid." When it came to cold-blooded, ruthless killing, he had few peers among old bad men of the West.

OMINOUS quiet hung over the little frontier town of Lincoln, New Mexico, on the bright morning of April 28, 1880. Along the sun-drenched single street few horses stood tied to the hitch-rails. The board sidewalks were deserted by all save a couple of Mexicans sprawled in the shade in front of La Rue's combination store and saloon. A naked, brown-skinned child played listlessly in the dirt at the edge of the sandy street. Voices sounded faintly from the direction of Alec La Rue's bar; but, even here, men talked in strangely subdued fashion of what lay grim and heavy on their minds.

Up the street, on the second floor of the old courthouse, Billy the Kid awaited the hangman. Sentenced to death on the gallows for his merciless ambush killing of Sheriff Brady on April 1, 1878, the Kid had only fifteen days to live before the trap was sprung. Yet — guarded day and night by two of Sheriff Pat Garrett's crack deputies — the famed outlaw had never once despaired of escaping the rope. Self-admitted cattle rustler and nineteen times a ruthless killer in his short span of twenty-one years, William "Billy the Kid" Bonney was coolly certain that he would never hang.

Deputy Jim Bell played poker with the Kid at a table in the center of the big courtroom; Deputy Bob Ollinger lounged in an arm chair nearby, his cold blue eyes intently watching the chained desperado. A double-barreled shotgun lay across Ollinger's knees, a Colt .45 sagged at his hip. Hate flared in the deputy's pale eyes — hate and unwilling fear.

"You don't look so good these days, Kid," drawled Ollinger suddenly, "Somethin' worryin' you?"

Billy stared levelly at his questioner. "Four months away from the sun, Bob," he replied softly. "Jail's jest about ruined my complexion. . . Two cards, Jim."

Ollinger sneered. "You ain't got much longer to wait. Fifteen days more an' you can quit worryin' about your complexion. Pat's ridin' to White Oaks this mornin' to hire a carpenter to build the gallows."

The Kid shrugged. "Everybody's got to die some day, Bob. Even you. . ." Billy spread his cards face-up on the table and grinned across at Bell. "Full house, Jim. I'm jest a fool for luck — held three queens an' filled with treys! That cleans you plumb out of matches, *amigo mio*."

BELL, a tall, dark man with a livid knife-scar across his left cheek, laughed good-naturedly. "You're too good a poker player for me, Kid. But I'll beat you at monte." Bell scooped the cards together and began to shuffle.

"*Bueno, muchacho*," smiled the young outlaw. He got up awkwardly from his chair, his leg-irons clanking, and sat on the edge of the table with his shackled feet resting on the seat of a chair. Bell permitted the Kid to assume this position whenever they played monte with the deputy dealing the cards, since only thus could Billy easily put his bets down with his manacled hands.

Ollinger watched this chummy procedure in tight-lipped disgust. To him, all this waiting around for justice to take its leisurely course was a lot of chicken-livered nonsense. If Pat Garrett had listened to *him*, the Kid would have been conveniently shot down "while resisting arrest" four months ago. This long-drawn-out death watch over the most dangerous outlaw in the Southwest was both nerve-racking and unnecessary. Mulling over the chilling hazards involved in playing watch-dog to Billy the Kid, Ollinger decided suddenly that he needed a drink. Stalking out, he paused at the head of the back stairway to place his heavy shotgun against the wall, just inside the armory door. Too damn hot to pack extra hardware. . .

Alone with his prisoner, Bell completed his shuffle and began to deal his monte layout. Billy stacked his little pile of matches before him on the table and smiled his boyish, disarming smile. "Five dollars on that red·deuce, Jim."

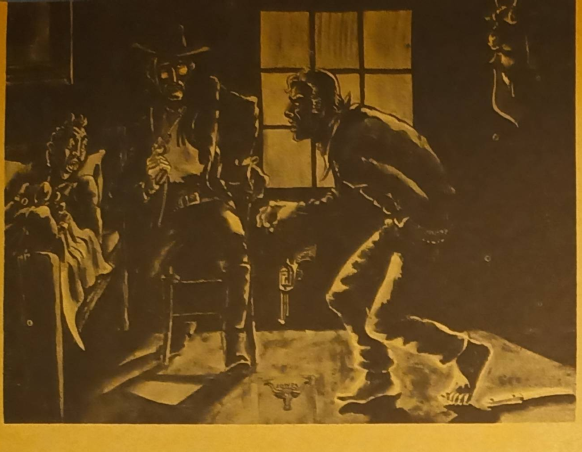
Bell went on flipping cards and the Kid lost. "Your luck ain't so strong now, Kid," laughed the big deputy, raking in the bet.

"Not right now," admitted Billy. "But it's bound to get better — soon!" The Kid's gray eyes flicked casually over his captor, noting that Bell had discarded his gun-belt and holster on this warm day. The deputy wore his Colt shoved down the waist-band of his pants on the right side. Billy hitched his wiry body a few inches nearer the middle of the table. "Can't reach so well with these ornaments on my wrists," he grinned.

Bell peeled off the jack of hearts. The Kid leaned closer. "Jack o' hearts, my lucky card —" He stretched out his manacled hands to place his bet and clumsily brushed the card off on the floor at Bell's left side. "Sorry, Jim. These damn bracelets made me do that. . ."

"That's all right, Kid. I'll pick it up." Bell stooped for the fallen card, his head

(Continued on following page)



The Kid leaped back with gun leveled. "QUIEN ES?" he barked—and received instant answer in the flash and roar of Garrett's Colt.

dipping below the edge of the table for just an instant. Panther-like, the outlaw flung himself forward, snatching the deputy's Colt. When Bell straightened up with a startled oath, he found himself covered with his own gun.

"Listen hard now, Jim — an' don't say a word!" rapped out the Kid. "Turn around now an' walk out that back door. I got to lock you in the armory. Don't make me kill you, Jim. We've been friends an' I'd sure hate to have to rub you out."

WHITE-FACED, speechless with shocked surprise, Bell turned around and started for the back door. Billy shuffled after him, dragging his cumbersome leg irons. The deputy opened the door, and the Kid stumbled through it behind him. The outlaw tripped over the threshold and fell sprawling on the narrow platform at the top of the stairs, at the end of which a door opened into the armory.

Instantly Bell plunged down the stairs. It was his one desperate chance to turn the tables, to gain the street and spread the alarm that the Kid was loose. His one chance — but it was a chance in a million and it failed. Behind him, stretched full length on the stair platform, Billy fired once. The slug caught Bell just below his left shoulder-blade, and the big deputy crashed into the railing and slid down it limply to collapse in a heap at the foot of the stairs.

Quickly the Kid scrambled to his feet. He didn't bother to look at Bell's crumpled body; he knew that the deputy was dead. Hurriedly he shuffled into the armory and picked up Ollinger's shotgun from where it rested against the wall. Breaking the weapon and checking the load, Billy took up a post at the open east window overlooking the street and La Rue's saloon. Coldly and calmly, with his own escape and life hanging in the balance, the Kid waited to kill the man he had come to hate during the bitter weeks of his imprisonment in this bare, bleak room. Not for an added chance at freedom would the outlaw forego this opportunity to still forever the taunting tongue of deputy Bob Ollinger.

Ollinger, drinking with a friend at La Rue's bar, heard the muffled report of the shot that killed Bell. He froze, glass of red whiskey half-raised to his mouth. There were no further shots — only heavy silence. No man spoke at La Rue's bar — and no man moved toward the courthouse whence the shot had sounded. Full ten seconds the strange tableau lasted — then Ollinger broke the spell. "That must be the Kid!" snarled the deputy. He slammed his drink down on the bar and dashed for the door, pulling his Colt as he ran.

THE gloomy old courthouse seemed to drowse peacefully in the spring sunshine as Ollinger approached it. Nothing seemed amiss — in fact, the building appeared deserted. Maybe that shot hadn't come from the courthouse at all. . .

"Hello, Bob!"

The deputy stopped short, an icy fear jolting his heart. That was the Kid's voice — light, pleasant, unmistakable! Coming from somewhere above him, from the second floor of the courthouse. . . .

Slowly, dreading what he might see, Ollinger looked up into the mocking gray eyes and white, smiling face of Billy the Kid — framed behind the deadly twin muzzles of the deputy's own shotgun. The outlaw leaned from an open window directly overhead, drawing a careful bead on Ollinger's heart. Frantically the deputy tried to raise his Colt to blast that white and smiling face. But flame spurted from one of those gaping muzzles above him. Nine buckshot slashed Ollinger's chest.

The booming roar was a stern signal to the good people of Lincoln to attend discreetly to their own affairs. Sheriff Pat Garrett was in White Oaks, and Pat's deputy lay dead in the street — shot down by Billy the Kid. Not yet did the apprehensive townsfolk know for a certainty that Jim Bell, too, was dead, but they suspected the worst.

Clearly this gory little mess was no concern of any citizen normally anxious to preserve a whole skin. Not one of a score of spectators felt inclined either to distinguish himself as a hero or to become the Kid's next victim. Half a dozen armed men stood meekly on the veranda of the Wortley Hotel, across the street from the courthouse, and observed the next act of the incredible drama unfolding there without lifting a weapon to interrupt.

Fascinated, as one watches a slow-moving cobra, these onlookers watched the Kid emerge from the front door in the second story of the courthouse. Boldly he stepped out on the porch above the street, within easy six-shooter range of every Colt-toting member of his audience. Only the leg-irons bound him now; his slender, supple hands had slipped out of the handcuffs.

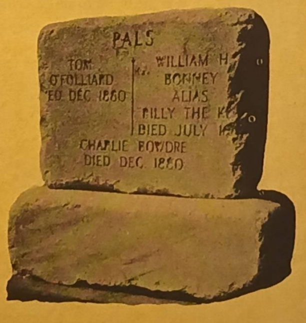
This was the Kid's great moment and he gloried in each split-second of it. For the present, his urgent need to escape completely left his mind. Billy's jail-starved ego expanded gratefully in response to the cringing fear of the townsfolk. To the Kid's distorted reasoning, the awe and terror apparent on the faces of these craven men was simply the adulation due him as a famous outlaw and gunman. Well, damn their yellow hides, he'd give 'em a show they'd never forget!

MOVING cautiously, gauging precisely the exact range of movement allowed him by the twelve-inch chains binding his ankles, Billy walked along the porch until he stood directly over the lifeless body of Bob Ollinger. Face down the deputy sprawled. About his body a pool of blood formed sluggishly, turning the deep dust of the street into darkly crimson mud. Deliberately the Kid leveled his shotgun — and once more all Lincoln heard the thunderous roar of its discharge. Ollinger's corpse jerked grotesquely to the impact of the heavy load of buckshot. The Kid lifted the empty weapon above his head and cast it down upon the riddled body of his enemy.

"*Adios*, Bob!" he sneered. "Take your popgun to hell with you!" Without a glance at his shocked, silent audience, Billy turned and hobbled back into the courthouse. He had a lot to do yet to make good his escape and he set about doing it at once, with all the icy nerve characteristic of him.

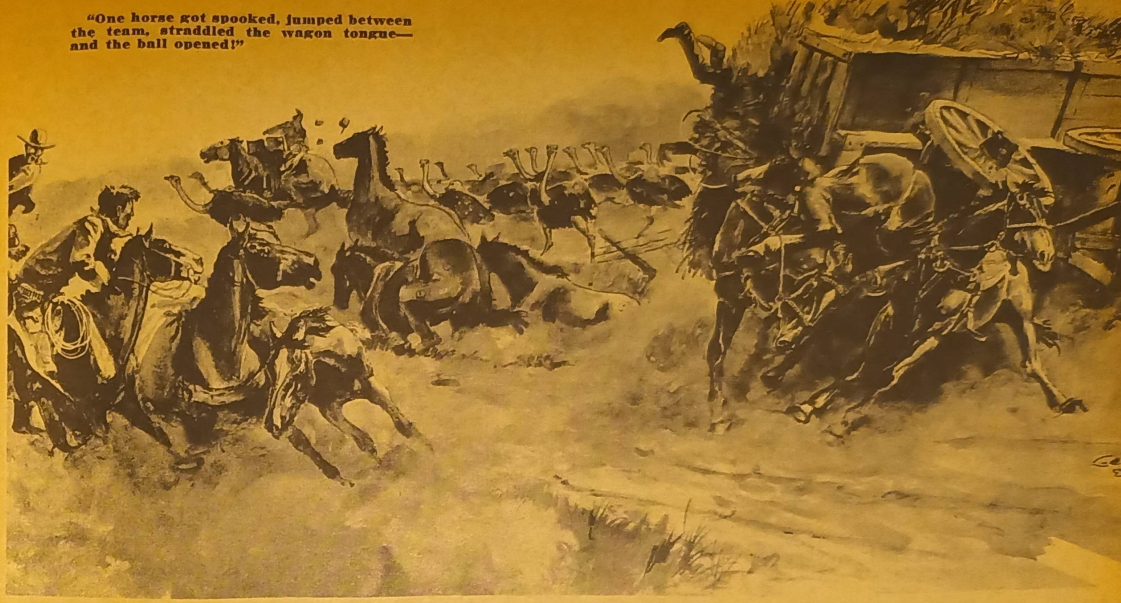
First, he entered the armory, where the citizens of Lincoln kept always on hand a supply of firearms and ammunition for use by sheriffs' posses in emergencies. The Kid chuckled in sardonic amusement as he selected a fine new Winchester rifle and two six-shooters to replace Jim Bell's Colt, which he placed on the armory floor. If only Pat Garrett could see him now! The old buzzard would go *loco, muy pronto*. Too bad he couldn't hide out somewhere around town and get a look at Pat's ugly face when he came riding

(Continued on page 46)


PALS
TOM O'FOLLIARD DIED DEC 1880
WILLIAM H BONNEY ALIAS BILLY THE K DIED JULY 1
CHARLIE BOWDRE DIED DEC. 1880

Final resting place for Billy the Kid at Ft. Sumner, N. M. Souvenir hunters chipped the stone's sides ragged.

"One horse got spooked, jumped between the team, straddled the wagon tongue—and the ball opened!"



Ostrich Stampede

"I'd sure like to ride one of them ridic'lous birds!" Smokey said. Five minutes later he did . . .

By **HERB WOOD**

Illustrated by George Phippen

SMOKEY and I left Williams, Arizona, with twenty head of horses to take to the Imperial Valley for the winter. We were going to do some trading and selling.

It took us three days to get to Phoenix, where we put our horses in the feed lot at Six Points. Next morning early we took off. We had two pack-horses, one with our bed roll, the other with our kitchen and chuck.

We were about four miles south of Phoenix, going down a road fenced with wire on both sides. On one side was a field of alfalfa; on the other was a herd of ostriches, about six hundred of them. We stopped to look at them—to see what they had that a turkey didn't. Smokey or I had never seen an ostrich. They were as tall as our horses, their necks were as long as a giraffe's, they had long legs and big feet. Smokey said that he would like to ride one. Little did he think his wish would come true!

We saw some men hauling in a big load of hay to grind up for the birds. They were a couple hundred yards off, coming our way. The ostriches got curious to see what our pack horses were. They were running in a circle, winding up like cattle after a stampede. One bird lined out to look us over. The rest were tromping on his heels.

We had a horse that was only half broken, and afraid of his shadow. He got spooked, ran into one of the teams that were hauling hay, got in between the horses, astraddle of the wagon tongue, tipped the load of hay over, broke the tongue out, and away they went, looking for another country that wasn't so wild. Then the other team ran too, and missed the culvert across the irrigation ditch. Most of the hay and the man went into the water.

Our horses stampeded through the fence among the ostriches. The horse with the kitchen pack hung up on a post, tore the pack open, and got in among the birds. He was bucking and squealing. Pots and pans were rattling and flying through the air. The first thing I knew I was right in the middle of the stampede.

I was leaning over the brow-band and going to town, when my horse jumped into a hole, turned over and threw me over his head. I landed on my belly. Just as I got to my feet, an ostrich ran over my horse. He got tangled up in the bridle reins, and stood on his head, but finally straightened up.

I grabbed the bird by the neck with both hands, and jumped astraddle of him. I was dizzy and about half out of wind. Then I commenced to see things. It looked to me like I was in the middle of the ocean. Wave after wave of birds was before my eyes when I could see straight. I had a death grip on his neck, and was sitting pretty. Just then an old bird reached out his long neck, and grabbed a mouthful of my ear. He pulled it out about six inches, lost his hold, and my ear snapped back, nearly knocking my head off.

THE old bird I was on was getting close to the outer edge of the stampede, and the irrigation ditch close to the culvert. When he got opposite the culvert, I jumped off and rolled into the ditch, grabbed hold of the culvert and hung on till the drags came by.

I crawled out looking like a drowned rat and felt like one, too. As soon as I got the water out of my hair and eyes, I could see the ostriches were swinging back my way. I crossed over the ditch,

(Continued on page 51)

Rhyolite, Nevada, today. It is unusual in that there are so many large buildings still standing—attesting to the faith of the men who invested in Harris' strike there. The old Casino is still open, serving drinks. Many curious relics of the old days are to be seen free at the Bottle House.

The Man Who Was Buried Standing Up

(Continued from page 33)

made the find while coming up the mountain to wash away some of that summer alkali with a shot of Skidoo's best. To mark the spot, he sunk his pick in the rock.

"The quartz was hard and smooth but with some deep cracks in 'er. Pure gold had run into the matrix, just the right thickness," Shorty explained. "Why you could pull these sheets of gold outta there and send them right into the mint. They'd stamp twenties and send 'em back to you, it was that pure."

Lots of friends wanted to pry the location out of Shorty. But this time the whiskey route was their undoing. Shorty hung on such a dinger that when he came around three days later, he'd plumb forgot which of the myriad canyons the find was in. Unconcerned, Shorty bought a new pick and set off on a new quest. But to this day, gold men working the crooked canyons of the Panamints still have one eye cocked for a weathered pick sticking out of Shorty's gold sheeted mine—the Lost Shorty Mine.

Shorty's pockets were empty as a wrestler's mind when Ed Cross started hurting to go to Goldfield, then roaring its loudest. Shorty agreed to split his rations with Ed to get there.

The pair camped about 70 miles south of Goldfield. Shorty was out locating his burros. Always his pick was with him. In a few minutes he came running into camp.

"Lookkee here, Ed!" Shorty shouted, his red, seamed face now crimson. "This is it! Bigger'n anything before." In his hand was a piece of mottled green rock, obviously specked with flitters of metal. The little piece looked like a crouching bullfrog.

Ed looked, hefted, and tasted the ore, then agreed it looked like the real thing all right. The prospecting was over. More sampling confirmed their guess, and Shorty dubbed it "Bullfrog."

"Me, I gonna play this 'un smart," Shorty observed when the monuments had been built. "No more giving my strikes away. Though I do admit I'd ruther find gold than mine it," he added afterwards. But when Shorty scooted in Goldfield, the story was different. The jewelry-store ore was just too damn good to keep. "No sirree, I ain't telling where I dug this," he said to the crowd gathered around him. "This 'un's all mine . . . . And Ed's too, of course."

Shorty was firm in keeping the secret . . . until perhaps midnight. By that time he'd been plied with enough popskull so's he couldn't hit the ground with his hat in three tries, and was put to bed.

NEXT morning Shorty pried open one eye, and reached for the jug on the nightstand. Underneath was a paper attesting to the sale of the Bullfrog claim for $1,000. It was notarized and seven other signatures witnessed it, along with Shorty's.

Shorty knew he'd been had again, and took a long drink to prove he was awake.

Shorty watched Goldfield empty as everyone rushed for the new strike. "That was a real strike," he often said later. "Why I saw one man nearly cry bcause he couldn't buy a mule for $500."

Bullfrog later spawned into Rhyolite, which drew 14,000 people at its peak and had two railroads servicing the town. In June of 1905, ten months after Shorty made his strike, Bob Montgomery refused a million dollars for his claim—and his was only one of the thousands that were filed and eventually produced gold.

It was his biggest find and, typically, Shorty treated. A *chili* joint boiled beans in oil cans for Shorty's many friends. At each place at the long table was thoughtfully set a bottle of champagne. Shorty later admitted all he'd gotten for a strike that produced ore so rich it was often mounted directly into jewelry, was about $900 and three barrels of whiskey. "But I drank all the whiskey," he observed modestly.

It was only a scant year later when Shorty and Pete Augurreberry were camped at Furnace Creek Ranch in Death Valley. "I seen some chuckwallas spitting on their feet to keep cool," Shorty told Pete. "Let's head up above for the Panamints."

Pete agreed, and they shoved off into the upper reaches of the Valley. Both men later claimed they'd spotted the first ore, but Shorty's fame had a far-reaching effect, and the new boom camp was named Harrisberg. Pete never got much for his share, but Shorty cashed out for 10G's and 35,000 shares of stock.

Shorty found he had as many friends on his wild trip to the East as he'd found in Death Valley. Coin was scattered far and wide—Kansas City, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia.

But Shorty got a shock when he returned to take up prospecting again. The stock taken in trade for his share in the Harrisberg property had a thumping assessment against them, one that Shorty couldn't meet. He was frozen out—in Death Valley!

Still muttering that it was all just a dang-blasted freeze-out game, that a city slicker could fenagle his money by just sitting in a bank, Shorty prospered the years away in Ballarat, telling and retelling his previous triumphs. In 1934 Shorty died.

DESPITE those friends who had no more loyalty than a poker chip and had drunk away his liquor through the years, Shorty's real friends gathered like a swarm of locusts for his funeral. But somewhere some of Shorty's carelessness and disregard for detail must have rubbed off on his followers.

Before the simple services had been completed someone noticed the donated coffin was of standard six foot size. The grave diggers, who'd lovingly spaded a hole in the desert at the base of Death Valley's Hanaupah Canyon, had dug a grave to fit Shorty's well-known five foot height. The casket was a foot too long!

Blistering desert winds and a pitiless sun prompted immediate decision. "We'll just lower her a little at one end, enough to cover him up, then put the casket in." And when a few shovelfuls were flung away, the casket was slid into the grave, standing at a sharp angle.

But it did the job. One old timer fondly remarked:

"Shorty wouldn't care, he was always ahead anyway. When they blow the trumpet for Judgment Day, Shorty'll already be on his feet, ready to stake a claim in them Golden Streets of Heaven."

Blizzard Trail

(Continued from page 25)

cables, but we worked till we got them tied onto the tongue of the calf wagon. Then we taken a wrap around our saddle horns and touched spurs to our mounts. Them horses sure had to bow their backs and dig in to break them wagon wheels out of the ice and start them rolling.

I looked back as we moved off, and seen the horse wrangler trying to get a saddle on a horse. I hoped he made it.

We rode up to that widow woman's house in a lope, with the calf wagon lumbering along behind. It sure done me good to see the cowhands I'd thought froze to death come pouring out of the house. They'd quit camp some time in the night and made it to the widow woman's house afoot. Some was sick as poisoned pups and puking all over the place. Them was the ones that suffered frost-bit hands and feet that had started swelling inside that warm house.

The rest helped us lift the boss out of the wagon and bring him inside. The old man was crying.

"Go back and try to save that nigger," he kept begging. "Don't let that pore black devil freeze if you can help it."

Even after we brought the Negro in, the old man kept crying and begging. He'd rode all the way from camp beside that pot-wrastler and had been too cold to know it.

Later, we went back after the bedrolls. That widow woman, she takened one room of the house for herself and turned the rest of it over to the trail crew. We stayed there eight days before the storm broke and we could take the backtrail after our drifted herd.

When the gather was finished, we tallied up a loss of one hundred and fifty head of pore cows and calves.

Not a bad loss, considering the weather.

From the SOUTHWEST REVIEW, Spring, 1945.

They killed my best friend

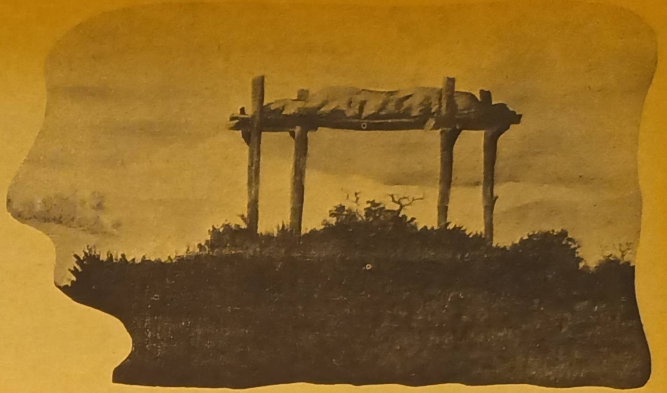
. . . those

GAUNTLET GLOVES

. . . the ones I stole from an Indian's grave!

by HARRY ROBB

Illustrated by Geo. Phippen



"It did look inviting, up on that rickety scaffold—just waiting for some cowpoke to pop a loop over it and pull'er to the ground . . ." Drawing by Wauneta Wyoming Robb.

IT sounds bad, I know. Maybe it *is* bad. But I can't help it. I'm a grave robber—an Indian grave robber. Or, maybe I should say, I used to be. I haven't robbed one in a long time now.

Nobody in his right mind will plunder Indian graves, but it *is* fascinating. It's dangerous, and it's undignified — but there's a lure to it that won't turn you loose. It's intriguing, that guess at what has been carefully laid away with an Indian, high up under a cliff, by mourning tribesmen. Perhaps the grave is underneath a pile of stones, high on a windswept hill, bound to poles up in a tree, or perched high in the air on a scaffold. The only sure "guess" is to dig in and see what the Indian may have called his treasured possessions.

I should have left that last grave alone. It did look inviting, though—perched up on the rickety scaffold. It appeared to be just waiting for some cowpuncher to pop his loop over an out-jutting corner pole. If he were reckless enough, perhaps crazy enough, he'd go to the end of a forty-foot rope with all the speed his horse could get up in that distance. In most cases, that's plenty of speed, for horses are plenty spooky of Indian smell—especially dead Indian smell!

I thought there might be some elk teeth in this one. Instead, among trinkets that no cowpuncher would care for, there was a pair of gauntlet gloves. They were tucked in, evidently as an afterthought—under the top blanket where they stayed in good condition while the Indian dried up. They were nice gloves, apparently never worn. They are still in perfect condition to this day. But I look at the bloodstains on them and they give me the creeps. They killed my best friend . . .

THE gloves smelled so strong that I tied some of the buckskin fringe strings into my horse's tail about half way down. Still, I had plenty of smell all the way in to camp.

When I rode in with the bead-decorated gloves, Roy Robbins was ready to trade the shirt off his back for them. When he found out where I'd gotten them, he talked a heap about working graves himself if they contained such treasures as that. I told him it was a stinking job at best. A dead Indian turns loose more smell than a skunk when he gets stirred up.

On top of that, I told Roy how dangerous it was. If a fellow gets caught at it, he stops robbing graves right then and there. You couldn't blame an Indian for parting your hair with a tomahawk if he found you robbing his dead.

"So, you just better not try it, Roy," I advised. But I knew that some day he would. Graves were numerous all over the Montana reservation. Too, Roy was a youngster. He wouldn't listen long to an older head.

I became so concerned that I offered to give him the gloves if he would promise me to leave the graves alone. "Don't wear the gloves either," I added. "They're dangerous while working cattle. Just hang on to them for a keepsake."

"Don't guess I'd want to wear them at that," Roy said. "They still smell like a dead Indian."

So Roy promised to give up all plans for grave robbing. He gave the gloves a good soapsudsing. It washed out a good bit of the smell. Long hours under a hot sun did the rest. That's when Roy went back on one part of his promise—he began wearing the gloves. I reminded him of the promise, and asked him if he didn't know that gauntlet gloves were no good for a cowpuncher.

"Hell!" he said simply. "They look as good on me as on an Indian!"

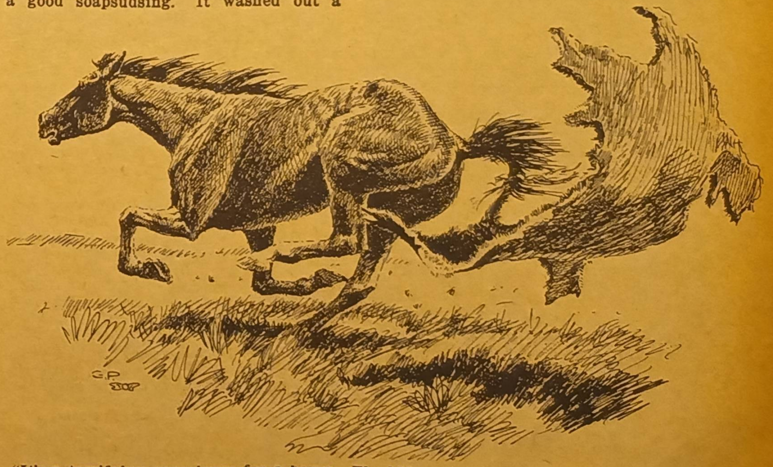
I didn't say more. I supposed he knew they were dangerous. Maybe he thought I was mothering him too much. Then again, maybe he didn't know, and before he found out it was too late.

One day, after he'd been wearing the gloves for about ten days, Roy came out of the corral leading a not-too-gentle broomtail. The horse had a mean look in his eyes. Roy put a hackamore on the nag and stuck his arm through three coils of the rope. When he threw the saddle blanket on the shifty-eyed cayuse, the horse boogered and started to run.

Those gauntlet gloves did the rest. The hair rope cinched up around the gauntlet. Roy didn't have a chance.

THE horse couldn't drag him far after they hit a stretch of sagebrush. Roy's

(Continued on page 49)



"It's a terrifying experience for a horse. The hide sailed high, popped together, caught on the sagebrush, snapped loose, went up over the killer's back—and banged the ground behind him."

A Mexican *JACAL* of the type mentioned in this story—home to the poorer element in Mexico as well as some of the border states.

Not The Will of God

(Continued from page 23)

his hand they fixed a sharp, strong dagger. Should anyone step on the trap, the bronze man would lunge through the false wall and tilt forward so as to stab the intruder to the heart.

"The entrance to the big cavern was naturally well hidden by some boulders. The Indians hid it even better. They had an understanding that the treasure should never be taken from the cave except in the presence of all members of the tribe.

" 'And now,' the old Indian said as he finished telling us all this, 'I am the last of the tribe. The others are all dead; most of them were killed. I can unlock the door. I have the right to dispose of the wealth. You have been generous to me, but it is plain that you live very hard. Why?'

"Then my husband Ignacio answered, 'Because God wills it.'

" 'No', replied the Indian, 'God no longer wills thus. Come with me and I will give you and your wife enough to let you live in plenty all the rest of your life.'

"The next morning very early my husband Ignacio left. The Indian waited here near the *jacal* all day. Ignacio did not return until long after dark. The Indian had left while the sun was setting. He was gone one year exactly. He came again on Christmas day. Again we gave him warmth and such food as we had. He was grateful. Again he asked why we continued to live so hard, and once more Ignacio replied that it was the will of God.

"The Indian then repeated his whole story. I know it was true, for he told it exactly as he told it the first time. 'Come with me in the morning,' he said to Ignacio, 'and I will take you to where there is a great plenty.'

"Early next morning, before daylight, Ignacio went away. I gave the Indian some breakfast. He asked me where my husband had gone. I did not know. He asked me when he would return. I did not know. He waited many hours, waited for Ignacio to return so that he might lead him to the cave of riches. He said it was not more than a day on foot, on into the mountains. At sunset, when he saw that Ignacio would not return so long as he remained, the Indian went away. He has never been back.

"No, it is not the will of God that we live thus on parched corn. It is the will of Ignacio."

AFTER Tomas heard this account he slept and then rode on to inspect the ties cut by other men. When he got back to the village, he told his employer, Don Joaquin Villareal, what he had heard.

Don Joaquin, who had recovered from his illness, at once determined to search for the cave. He went to Chihuahua City and secured a permit to prospect for mines. He took Tomás with him and an extra mule with provisions. They went to Ignacio's *jacal*, and then they traveled west, deeper into the mountains. After they had been looking a long, long time, they spied a hole in the top of a mountain. They threw rocks down the hole. They had to wait many seconds before they heard the rocks hit and echo below. The echoing sounds told them there was a cavern beneath.

Don Joaquin thought it best to enter the cavern through a tunnel from one side. A deep ravine cutting down one side of the mountain afforded a practicable place at which to start the tunnel. From a *rancheria* not far off and from other places Don Joaquin hired about twenty men, established a good camp, and set about his great work.

There was nothing but rock, rock, rock. The laborers cut their way into it by inches, carrying the chipped pieces out in *zurrones*—rawhide bags slung from the head of the carriers. They worked until Don Ignacio's funds for hiring men were exhausted. Then the only way he could keep on after the treasure was to promise each laborer a share of what he knew would eventually be found. At the end of six months they struck a kind of reddish sandstone that appeared to have been wet with blood. Quickly they tunnelled through it and were in an enormous cavern.

The cavern was empty. Yet some animal bones and many marks of fire showed that human beings had once been there and had eaten. Far, far overhead could be seen a speck of light, through the discovery hole. But the cavern was dark, the light that came through the long tunnel being almost as dim as that from the hole overhead. All exploring had to be done with candles. The emptiness and the darkness discouraged the workmen, and now all but four of them quit. One of the four who remained was Tomás. Don Joaquin was not discouraged.

For days he went about the walls of the cavern, striking into them with a pick, Tomás holding the light. Tallow was costly, and they had to use sotol stalks for torches. Finally, Don Joaquin struck a piece of wall that sounded hollow. Then with a few strokes he broke through.

In the dim light made by the torch of sotol stalk, which could hardly penetrate the dust, Tomás and Don Joaquin saw in front of them a figure of bronze larger than a real man. In its right hand was a dagger, securely bound there by rawhide thongs. Perhaps the trap-door had not been correctly built; perhaps many years of standing had caused it to grow stiff. Anyway, God was good and the dagger did not lunge forward to stab the intruders.

Tomás and his master were in the treasure room. The old Indian had told the truth. There were piles of silver bars, of gold, jewels, guns, silver-mounted saddles, finely wrought bridles, finely engraved swords.

THE discovery was made close to dark on a Saturday. Don Joaquin said: "We are tired almost to death. Work and hunger have made us weak. Wealth so sudden has made us weaker. Let us rest tomorrow, the day of God, and give thanks to Him. On Monday morning we five shall divide all things. Any man who wishes may go to the village, but not a word must be said of this discovery. I and one other of you will sleep in the entrance to the tunnel so that no stranger shall enter."

Only two of the laborers went to the village. They drank much tequila and they talked. A large guard of soldiers on their way to fight the Yaqui Indians were camped in this village. Some of the officers heard the talk of the miners.

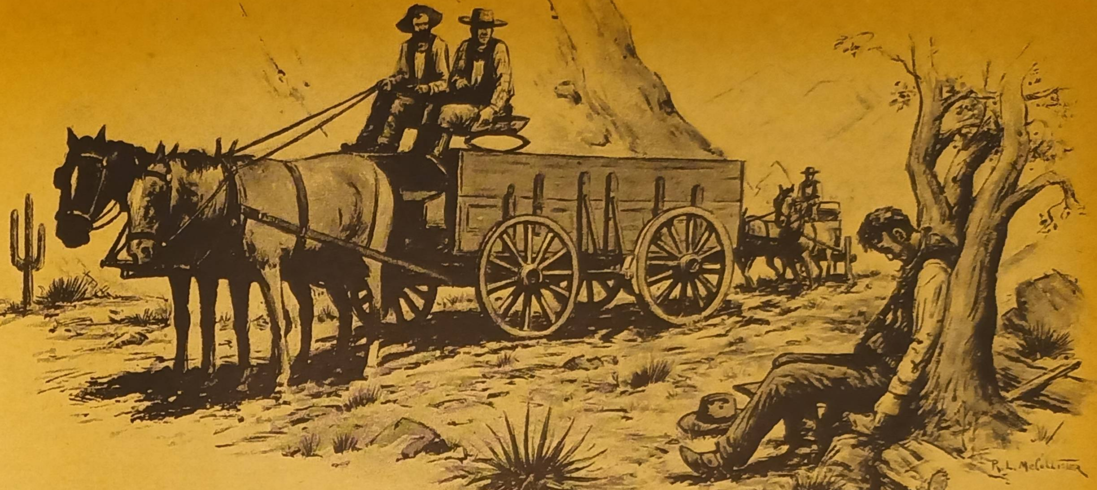
About daylight on Monday morning, Don Joaquin's camp was surprised and he and all his men were made prisoners. Also, other men who had helped with the work but who had deserted were brought in as prisoners. Then, chained together, the captives were marched southward. They left the wild mountains and came into a country that had cart roads. They were fed almost nothing. They were jabbed and beaten when they lagged. Some of them died.

Finally, after having been driven for weeks over hundreds of miles, the remnant of prisoners were cast into a dark prison of thick rock walls. Tomás had a cell into which no light at all entered. Tortillas and water were brought to him by a guard carrying a lantern. The guard left immediately and he ate in darkness. He stayed there until he lost all account of time and the seasons.

Then, without explanation, he was liberated. He did not know why he had been made prisoner; he did not know why he had been freed. He made his way north to the village in the Sierra Madre. There he learned how Don Joaquin had been stood against a 'dobe wall and shot. The village was all but deserted. An old man said that tie-cutters no longer worked in the forests. Tomás came on north and crossed the Rio Grande.

"Señores," he concluded his tale, "I have told you the truth. These eyes have seen all that I have described. These hands held the pick that dug and they held the sotol stalk that lighted up the man of bronze with a dagger in his hand and then the treasure. These feet walked with chains.

"That the army officers got the treasure I am sure. They may have left something. I do not know. At least the cavern with the tunnel into it is still there."



The Mysterious JOHN RINGO

Head of a rustler clan in Old Tombstone, John Ringo met an end that nobody has figured out yet

By NEVADA DICK

Illustrated by R. L. McCollister

IF EVER a record were compiled of the bad men who drifted in and out of the booming settlement of Tombstone, Arizona, during the 70's nowhere on that long list could be found a more mystifying character than John Ringo, an outlaw so adroit in covering his tracks that nobody has ever yet been able to trace his complete history.

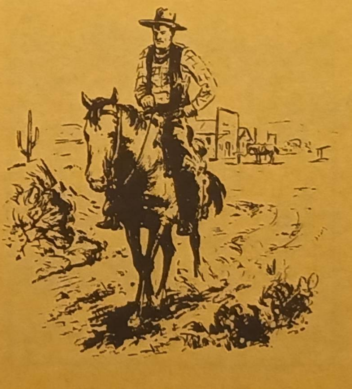
Arriving in Tombstone, Ringo mingled with the flotsam and jetsam drifting in from all over the world, yet he stood apart. A tall, handsome man with auburn hair, dark sombre eyes, easy manners, showing the marks of education and refinement—few suspected that beneath the surface he was as bloodthirsty, sardonic and ruthless as the rascally ole hellion, "Old Man" N. H. Clanton, leader of the outlaw and rustler fraternity which infested the surrounding territory.

It has been established that John Ringo was born in 1844 and was a cousin of the infamous Younger family. His real name was John Ringold. During an earlier period he participated in many a fracas with his Texan companions in the trail towns of Kansas, where incidentally, he had become acquainted with the Wyatt Earp cure for obstreperous cowboys. Ringold had also taken part in a number of cattle wars.

In 1876, while a cohort of the Scott Cooley faction in the recorded Mason County, Texas, feud, he had been apprehended and the following year had been incarcerated in Rusk Prison, Huntsville, Texas, a fellow convict of John Wesley Hardin, No. 1 gunslinger of Texas.

Escaping his guards, Ringold crossed the Arizona line, just "three jumps ahead of the sheriff." His arrival in the territory was as spectacular as his subsequent departure. No chapter of Cochise County history would be complete without mention of his name. John Ringo was a landmark.

"Ringo headed for Jake McCann's saloon in Antelope Springs—a scorching hot ride of nine miles across mesquite and cactus wastelands."



With the subjugation of the wild Apaches, who for generations had made Arizona unhealthy for settlement, the territory became a mecca in which every man with a price on his head sought sanctuary. Pima County, embracing some 28,000 square miles, was soon under the domination of an outlaw horde more diabolical than their predecessors, the Apaches.

THE phenomenal growth of Tombstone ushered in another era, and Cochise County was lopped off Pima County. The appointment of a sheriff named Johnnie Behan, by Governor Fremont, did not set well with Wyatt Earp. Resigning his deputyship, which he held under Sheriff Sibell, Wyatt secured an appointment from C. P. Dade as deputy United States Marshal.

As he had done in other frontier towns, Wyatt Earp set about bringing law and order into Tombstone, a move which was not taken kindly to by the cowboys or rustlers. Behan, jealous of what he termed Wyatt's usurpation, became antagonistic and fostered the animosity shown by the cowboy element towards his rival Earp. If the marshal apprehended a cowboy, the sheriff released him, and it was only a matter of time before the two factions would clash in open combat.

In December 1881, Doc Holliday, an Earp henchman, was accosted by John Ringo in front of the Cosmopolitan.

"What's all this talk you have been doing against me?" demanded Ringo.

(Continued on page 48)

Hellacious Young Hellion

(Continued from page 40)

back from White Oaks and first heard the news that his two deputies were dead and the Kid escaped!

Now Billy was ready to make his getaway. Brazenly, the new Winchester held lightly under one arm, he clumped down the back stairs. At the foot he stepped over the body of Jim Bell. Casually, in passing, the Kid noted with professional gratification that his lightning snap shot had drilled the deputy neatly through the heart.

Adjoining the courthouse to the rear was the little adobe jail that Pat Garrett had considered unsafe to house such a ruthless desperado as the Kid. Hither the outlaw made his awkward way and rapped on the door of the jail kitchen with the muzzle of his rifle.

Old Goss, the jail cook, came tremblingly to the door. Billy laughed at the sight of the cowering old man and patted him on the shoulder.

"Hell, don't be scared of me — I ain't goin' to hurt you! Jest rustle up an axe an' bust this damn leg chain."

"Sure, Billy, sure!" gasped the frightened cook. He went trotting out to his woodpile to fetch the axe. Three vigorous blows and the chain was broken. The Kid drew the broken ends of the chain up along his leg and tied them to his belt with pieces of string.

"Now I can ride again," smiled the outlaw. "Go catch that black pony out there in the pasture behind the jail an' throw a saddle on him for me. Don't get any foolish notions about runnin' away. I get mad awful easy — an' the madder I get, the straighter I shoot!"

THE Kid rolled a cigarette and smoked, humming softly to himself as he watched Goss attempting to catch the pony. The animal was young and spirited and had a two-acre lot to maneuver in. He'd let Goss get within ten feet of him and then he'd race off, snorting and kicking playfully at his clumsy pursuer. The cook was bandy-legged and badly scared to boot, and the old man had a rough time of it before he finally managed to herd the pony into a corner of the fenced-in pasture and get a bridle on him. Half an hour elapsed before the panting, perspiring Goss led the saddled colt up to the imperturbable outlaw. The cook apologized anxiously for the delay.

"Sorry, Billy — I couldn't ketch him no quicker. You saw how he kept runnin' off on me —"

"It's all right, Goss," the Kid cut in. "None of the coyotes in this town have the guts to try to stop me, anyway. I could hang around all day an' they'd still be waitin' for Pat Garrett to ride up an' tell 'em what to do!"

Billy swung easily to the saddle and grinned down at his perturbed benefactor. "Stop shakin', Goss! You'll outlive me an' Pat Garrett both. Say hello to the old devil for me when he gets back from White Oaks — an' tell him I'm savin' a slug with his name on it. *Adios, compadre. . .*"

Gaily Billy the Kid rode out of Lincoln. On the outskirts of town the outlaw turned in his saddle and looked back. There was no excitement — no rush of angry men for horses drowsing in the sun along the hitch-rails. Lincoln was well content to let him go his way unmolested.

Billy rattled out his sardonic chuckle and turned his pony's head toward the distant mountains. Armed and free and forking a good horse — what more could a man ask? The Kid rode untroubled by any nagging fear for the future.

EARLY morning lay calm and crystal-clear on the desolate sandhills about Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Beneath a scrubby cottonwood tree a small cook-fire burned. Around the tiny blaze, lounging comfortably on their spread-out saddle blankets, three men were finishing breakfast.

The leader of the trio, a tall, lean man with a darkly saturnine face, drained his second cup of coffee and remarked: "Sumner's just a few miles ahead, boys. Any suggestions?"

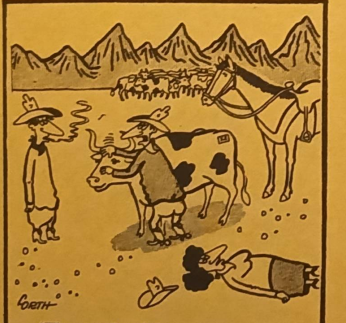
Deputy Tip McKinney squinted reflectively at the speaker. "I'd say that you an' me ought to lay out here in the hills an' let Poe ride in alone an' sort of nose around. He's new to Sumner. Most everybody in town knows Sheriff Pat Garrett an' more'n a few know me. Fifteen minutes after we hit Beaver Smith's saloon the Kid would know it an' be hightailin' for Mexico. That is, if Billy is hidin' out in Sumner at all."

Garrett nodded. "Makes sense to me. What do *you* say, Jack?"

Deputy John W. Poe smiled wryly. Three inches shorter than the six-foot four-inch Garrett but broad-shouldered and muscular, Poe was an officer of keen intelligence and quiet humor. "McKinney's right, Pat. It's the only way we can get information. Good deal like stickin' my head into a nest of rattlers, but it has to be done."

The Sheriff's hawk-like visage softened into something almost akin to affection. "Don't provoke trouble, Jack. Nobody's goin' to stop lead on this trip if I can help it. The two deputies Billy killed makin' his getaway in Lincoln are more'n enough. If there's any shootin' to be done, I'll do it. Ever since I started to hunt the Kid for murderin' Sheriff Brady back in '78, I've known that some day it'd be either him or me. I've got a pretty good hunch Billy knows that, too . . ."

Garrett paused, frowning thoughtfully. "Play it this way, Jack," he said finally. "Ride into town, buy a few drinks for the boys around old Beaver Smith's bar an' see what you can pick up. If you can't learn anything there, mosey out to Charlie Rudolph's ranch west of town. Charlie's a good friend of mine—he'll tell you if the Kid is hereabouts. I'll give you a note for him . . . We'll wait here for you until dark. If you don't show up, we'll ride in to the Mexican village of Punta de la Glorietta, four miles north of Sumner. There's a double row of cottonwoods along the road toward Sumner, just outside the village. We'll meet you there at nine o'clock tonight."



"He ran head-long into my wife! For a minute I thought he was hurt!"

THE July sun was beating down fiercely as Poe jogged his horse into Fort Sumner. The deputy dismounted in front of Beaver Smith's saloon and tied his pony to the hitch-rail. Old Beaver himself, bent, grizzled, and coldly suspicious, inspected the stranger from his post in the doorway of his establishment.

"Got anything cold to drink?" asked Poe. "Been ridin' so long my tongue feels like a woolen sock!"

Beaver ignored the question and the feeble attempt at witticism. "Where you from?" he demanded bluntly.

Poe's blue eyes twinkled. "Is that a nice way to greet a weary traveler? But—since you asked me—I'm from White Oaks."

"White Oaks your home?"

The deputy shrugged, losing his smile. "Sometimes. I do a little prospectin' here an' there. Headin' for Mobeetie right now."

Out of the corner of his eye Poe observed a number of armed citizens converging on him from several directions. Immediately he was surrounded. More questions were hurled at him in rapid-fire order.

"Stranger around here?"

"Traveled far?"

"Where you headed?"

Poe forced a laugh. He was in a tight spot and he knew it. Yet he was confident he could talk his way out of danger and, with luck, secure the information he sought. Two days before, in White Oaks, he had been tipped off by a drunken drifter named Graham that Billy the Kid had holed up in Fort Sumner to be near his Mexican sweetheart. The deputy had little faith in his boozy informant, but even skeptical Pat Garrett had agreed that every tip must be investigated. So far, in the ten weeks that had elapsed since the Kid had shot his way out of Lincoln courthouse, all leads had petered out in short order. Even the Apache trailers that Garrett had hired from the Mescalero Reservation had been able to track the elusive outlaw only as far as Baca Canyon, a dozen miles west of Lincoln. Beyond that point the fugitive's trail had vanished as completely as if the towering mountains themselves had hidden him.

"Take it easy, boys," drawled Poe. "I can talk a helluva lot better after I've had a drink. Will you join me?"

Over red whiskey, chased with cold spring water, the tense atmosphere eased and talk flowed smoothly. Casually, the deputy discussed cattle and crops and the growing necessity for irrigation in the dry back country. Carelessly he remarked that he had found folks down in White Oaks stirred up over a report that Billy the Kid had been seen in that vicinity some time previously.

In the significant silence following this observation, Poe duly noted the quick side glances exchanged by his listeners. Subsequent efforts to renew the conversation fell awkwardly flat. The deputy realized that nothing could be learned here — these men were all friends of Billy the Kid. Poe bought a final round of drinks and left. Old Beaver came to the door and watched dourly as he crossed the street to a restaurant.

An hour later the deputy rode out of town toward the east. Once out of sight among the hills, Poe doubled back and cut cross-country to the Rudolph ranch seven miles west of Fort Sumner.

A blood-red sun was dipping behind the western ridges when Poe rode up to the ranch house and asked for the owner. Charlie Rudolph read Garrett's note and insisted warmly that the deputy eat first and talk later.

After supper the two men sat on the ranch-house veranda, smoking cigarettes and talking idly. Deftly Poe brought up the subject of the fugitive Billy the Kid's whereabouts, and was amazed at the agitated reaction of his genial host. Rudolph was much more than perturbed — he was genuinely alarmed.

"I don't know a damned thing about the Kid!" exploded the ranchowner. "Pat Garrett should know better than to send you here to question me. If the Kid *were* hidin' out around Sumner an' I *did* betray him to the law—my life wouldn't be worth a plugged *peso!* If Billy didn't get me, his friends would. Anyhow, for my money, the Kid is across the border right now. After rustlin' hundreds of cattle an' killin' twenty-one men durin' the past few years, Billy sure must realize that New Mexico ain't safe for him any more. Most of the rustlers an' gunmen are killed off an' the old wild days are just about done. The Kid is smart enough to know when the string is run out an' to pull his freight while there's still time."

At nine o'clock that evening Poe rejoined Garrett and McKinney at the appointed rendezvous near Punta de la Glorietta. The tall Sheriff listened in grim silence to his deputy's recital of the day's activities.

"Just as I figured!" Pat nodded gloomily. "The Kid would be a damn fool to stay north of the line after killin' Bell an' Ollinger in Lincoln—an' whatever else he may be, Billy is no fool."

Poe—a shrewder psychologist than the forthright Garrett—shook his head. "I can't agree with you, Pat. The whole thing shapes up all to the good. George Graham—dirty drunk that he is—heard *something* in White Oaks. He's too stupid to have imagined it. Old Beaver Smith an' those tough *hombres* in Sumner know something too. An' your friend Charlie Rudolph shook in his boots when I mentioned the Kid. It adds up, Pat. Billy is hidin' out somewhere in Fort Sumner. We must move fast. Already one of his pals may have tipped him off that there's a nosy stranger in town askin' questions about him."

Garrett laughed harshly. "Needn't worry about that. Buckshot Bill Roberts was the only man ever made that little demon run away—an' Buckshot's dead! The Kid would wait for you to show up—an' grin when he threw his gun on you. I don't believe Billy's within two hundred miles of here, but we'll look around anyway."

"Billy's good friend Pete Maxwell lives in Sumner. Maybe the Kid's holed up with Pete. Let's go see Maxwell, anyhow," urged McKinney.

"I know Pete an' if you think *he'd* talk, you're loco!" snorted the Sheriff. "Pete's half-Mexican—an' most all Mexicans love the Kid like he was a son or a brother. He's lived among 'em so much he talks the lingo as well as any *vaquero* . . . But we'll go chin with Pete, if you like. Hell—let's visit everybody while we're in town! On the way to Maxwell's we'll take a look at Charlie Bowdre's old place. His wife, Manuela, kept on livin' there after I killed Charlie at Stinkin' Spring. If the Kid's really in Sumner, as you fellows believe, he may be hidin' out there with the widow of his old *compadre*."

THROUGH the avenue of cottonwoods, silvered now by a huge full moon, Garrett and his two deputies rode to Fort Sumner. On the outskirts of the town they tied their horses in a grove of trees on the bank of the Pecos and walked another quarter of a mile until they came to a peach orchard. Just across the road stood the home of Manuela Bowdre, widow of Charlie Bowdre, erstwhile cattle rustler, gunman, and one-time close friend of Billy the Kid.

For two hours Garrett, Poe and McKinney lounged restlessly there in the black shadows of the orchard, watching the darkened house across the road. It was midnight by the Sheriff's watch before Garrett decided to abandon the fruitless vigil.

"Let's go find Pete Maxwell an' then move on to Roswell," growled Pat. The Sheriff was bored with inaction and disgusted with his deputies' fine theories. He didn't bother to conceal the fact.

Silently the three officers moved down the road into the sleeping village. Garrett knew the streets and guided them unerringly to the former commissioned officers' quarters at the old army post. The large adobe-and-frame building was now the home of Pete Maxwell.

Not a light showed in the house as they approached it. "Pete's bedroom is right there in the southeast corner," whispered Garrett. "You fellows stay here. I'll go in an' wake Pete."

The Sheriff slipped quickly across the veranda and entered the open door of Maxwell's bedroom. Poe and McKinney sat down on the edge of the porch and rolled smokes. A cricket chirred sleepily in the shrubbery and a night-bird mewed somewhere overhead. The stillness of the warm summer night was so profound that the faint murmur of the river off to the south could be heard clearly.

Inside the dark bedroom, Garrett gently shook the sleeping Maxwell by the shoulder and called his name. "Pete—Pete, wake up! It's Garrett."

Maxwell, startled, grabbed instinctively for his gun-belt hanging on the bed-post within reach of his hand; then relaxed with a gusty sigh of relief as he recognized his midnight visitor.

"*Nombre de Dios*, Pat, is it you? What are you doing here in the middle of the night?"

"Not so loud, Pete! I'm looking for the Kid. I've had word—"

Outside, in the bright moonlight beyond the porch, a voice cracked out a question in Spanish—a voice that Garrett recognized. The Sheriff's left hand shut down hard on Maxwell's shoulder, wordlessly bidding him to be quiet.

The voice repeated "*Quien es?*"—with a note of puzzled anger this time. Garrett heard Poe answer in honest amazement: "Hey, put down that gun! What the hell's the matter with you—we won't hurt you!"

Motionless, the Sheriff waited. Pete Maxwell lay as a man petrified with terror. A watch might have ticked twenty times since the voice had first spoken; yet to Garrett, sitting in the darkness beside Maxwell's bed, the time interval seemed like an eternity.

Suddenly a figure loomed in the doorway. The intruder hesitated a moment, then groped his way toward Maxwell's bed.

"Pete"—came the light, vibrant voice that Garrett knew so well—"Pete, who are those fellows outside?"

In the velvet blackness at the head of Maxwell's bed, the Sheriff sat tense and immobile in his chair, his mind working coldly and at lightning speed. Here was the showdown, with Death itself about to deal the cards—Death blinded only momentarily by darkness!

Still sitting, Garrett whipped out his gun. The intruder—hearing the slight scraping sound of revolver leaving holster — leaped back with gun leveled. "*Quien es?*" he barked—and received instant, irrevocable answer in the flash and roar of Garrett's Colt. Face down, he plunged to the floor. A single gasping sigh gurgled into silence.

The long man hunt was over. Billy the Kid was dead.

DANNY VALUSKUS

The Mysterious John Ringo

(Continued from page 45)

"Yes! I did call you a cowthief and I repeat it," replied Holliday.

Open battle between the two was avoided by a police officer.

Ringo's appearance thereafter in Tombstone became a challenge. Wyatt, Virgil, and Morgan Earp, and Doc Holliday stood one day in front of Bob Hatch's saloon in conversation with the Mayor. Directly across Allen Street, John Ringo, Ike, Fin and Billy Clanton, Tom and Frank McLowery lounged in front of the Grand Hotel. Killer light in his eyes, Ringo crossed the street. Walking up to Wyatt, he hissed, "We hate you and you and your gang hate us . . . Step out into the street with me. You and I will settle between us who is to rule."

"I'm a police officer, not one of your rowdy crowd," replied Wyatt. "Take yourself off, Ringo; I take no part in such a game." Wyatt turnd his back on Ringo and entered Hatch's saloon. Ringo joined his cohorts and the rustlers left town, but threatened to bring a showdown at a future date.

FOR some time following this, Ringo absented himself from town and with Old Man Clanton's sons foraged into Mexico. Driving a herd of rustled stock, the gang was pursued by a band of irate Mexicans. In a fight which followed, Ringo and his cohorts accounted for fourteen of the *vaqueros*. Later, Old Man Clanton, Dick Grey, Jim Crane, Bud Snow, Billy Lang and Harry Henshaw, driving the stolen stock to market, were ambushed in Guadalupe Canyon; all except Henshaw were slain. With the demise of Old Man Clanton, John Ringo became head of the rustlers; his lieutenant, Curly Bill Graham.

OCTOBER, 1881, saw Ike and Billy Clanton in company with the two McLowerys, Frank and Tom, back in Tombstone. Ike, making threats that he was gunning for the Earps, was treated to a "buffaloing" by Earp, who then issued a mandate for him to get out of town. Instead of leaving, the outlaws gathered together at the OK Corral. Wyatt, Virgil, and Morgan Earp, and Doc Holliday then decided the time had arrived for a showdown. Four abreast, they marched down upon their enemies. After the gun smoke had cleared, Billy Clanton and the two McLowery boys had ceased to take interest in mundane affairs, Ike Clanton alone escaping.

The officers were exonerated despite all the efforts of Sheriff Behan to have them arrested for murder. Mayor John P. Clum had sided with the Earp faction, thus incurring wrath of the rustlers.

ON December 14th they attempted to assassinate him. Virgil Earp was the next victim selected. On December 28th he was attacked by five men who emptied shotguns into him. Virgil survived, although he was crippled for life. Of the five bushwhackers, four were identified —John Ringo, Ike Clanton, Hank Swilling, and Frank Stillwell, a deputy of Behan's. Behan definitely sided with the outlaws and refused to attempt their apprehension.

The outlaws, bent upon exterminating their enemies, next laid plans for placing Morgan Earp out of the running. Those selected for the foul deed were Hank Swilling, Pete Spence, Indian Charlie, and the deputy Frank Stillwell.

Morgan Earp entered Hatch's saloon on the night of March 17th, 1882. Walking to the rear, he stood beside a pool table, cue in hand, preparing to play a game with Bob Hatch. Morgan's back was to a door which led to an alley in the rear. Through this door, the assassinators sent two slugs into his body. Morgan passed away within an hour. Thus did the outlaws decimate the ranks of the Earps, which led to their final departure from Tombstone.

Morgan Earp had not yet been placed in the ground before Wyatt Earp had extracted payment. In Tucson, Frank Stillwell met his end. Ringo, Swilling, and Ike Clanton fled to Sonora, Mexico, where during a holdup, Swilling was knocked off. Meanwhile, Wyatt scoured the country searching for the murderers. Behan had issued a warrant for Wyatt's arrest for the killing of Stillwell, but Wyatt, Doc Holliday, and several cohorts had departed for Colorado before it was served. They well knew that, once in the hands of Behan and his outlaws, they would be slain before being brought to trial. Before leaving Cochise County, Wyatt had the satisfaction of dealing out justice to Indian Charlie. Also, he claimed to have killed Curly Bill.

FOLLOWING the departure of Wyatt Earp, charges were brought against Sheriff Behan. He was indicted by the grand jury for malfeasance of office. Shortly thereafter, J. L. Ward succeeded him. With Behan's removal, Ringo found himself *persona non grata* in Tombstone.

With his old associates either dead or departed, dour-faced Ringo had little to look forward to. The more he thought over his misspent life, the more morose he became. Finally, he sought to drown his sorrows in liquor. For a week Tombstone witnessed Ringo sodden drunk, vicious and in a fighting mood. Then, securing his horse from the livery stable he left Tombstone.

It was a scorching hot day in July. A ride of nine miles across the mesquite and cactus brought Ringo to a halt at Antelope Springs, where Jake McCann ran a saloon.

After a day of heavy drinking at McCann's, Ringo again took to the trail. Sulphur Springs next saw him. Following another extended debauch, the bleary-eyed outlaw left, saying he was going to Galeyville.

In West Turkey Creek Canyon stands a tree of unique proportion. Three trees have grown together around an eighteen-inch boulder, forming a seat like a chair. Here Ringo found surcease on July 13th, 1882.

July 14th, around noon, several lumber wagons bound for Morse's sawmill passed the spot. John Yoas, a teamster, made a gruesome discovery.

"There's a dead man over there!" he shouted.

John Yoas and Robert M. Bowler investigated. "My God, it's Ringo!" cried both men.

Putrefaction had set in. On the rock seat sat Ringo, at his right side leaned his Winchester; beside it, his hat. Two cartridge belts were about his body, one upside down. His pistol belt was full. The rifle belt had only seven cartridges in it. His right hand held a Colt .45. The gun sight, caught in his watch chain, prevented Ringo's hand from dropping into his lap. He had placed the gun against his head, above his right ear, and pulled the trigger. Only one shell had been exploded.

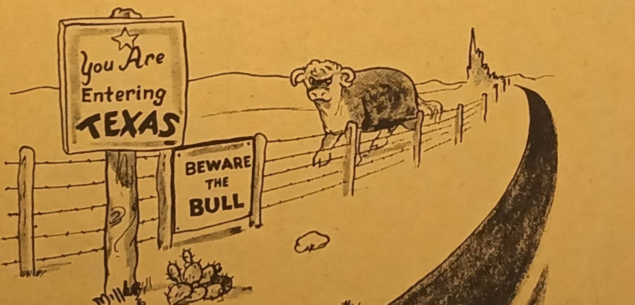
These were the details. The verdict was "suicide" found by the coroner's jury—Thomas White, John Blake, J. W. Bradfield, B. F. Smith, W.W. Smith, A. E. (Bull) Lewis, A. S. Neighbors, James Morgan, J. C. McGreagor, J. W. Duval, Frank McKinney, Fred Ward, John Yoas, and Robert M. Bowler (the latter, the last living man on that jury, died in 1940).

Walter Burns, in his book "Tombstone," gives Jim Morgan, Theadore White, and Bill Knott as the jury. Burns says Morgan discovered the body and that Ringo was killed by Frank Leslie. S. N. Lake, in "Wyatt Earp," says the body was discovered by Pony Deal and John Yoas; that Johnnie-Behind-The-Deuce O'Rouke killed Ringo. John Ringo had led a lynch mob after O'Rouke, following his murder of Henry Schneider in Charleston. Wyatt Earp had saved the tinhorn's life. So to square accounts for himself and Earp, O'Rouke had blown out the drunken man's brains.

Did the swashbuckling braggart, Buckskin Frank Leslie, dispose of Ringo as he claimed? Was Ringo's slayer the tinhorn gambler Johnnie-Behind-The-Deuce O'Rouke? Or was it SUICIDE?

Both Leslie and O'Rouke were craven individuals who would be capable of slaying a drunken man, yet neither had the guts to face Ringo when sober. Take your choice as to his demise.

"John Ringo tried to drown his gory pas'
By fillin' his belly from a whiskey glass
Then he took him a ride towards Galeyville,
What happen' to John is a mystery still."



Gauntlet Gloves

(Continued from page 43)

scared screams were like a knife cutting me apart. I ran after them blindly, yelling. I felt utterly helpless.

I guess I went a little crazy. I kept shouting at the horse that he'd get a damned good shooting when I caught up with him—as if that would make him stop. But my trigger finger got mighty limp when finally the runaway horse slowed. I felt Roy over and knew there was no life. Roy was done for.

I don't know why I didn't shoot the horse. A man never knows why he did this or didn't do that at such times. I just loosened the rope, took off the gloves, stuck them in my pocket and took Roy in.

When a cowboy wants to rid the world of a horse he thinks is mean enough to die by running himself to death, he resorts to a beefhide drag. There is no greater punishment for an outlaw horse. The animal just doesn't stop running. He'll go right on off the end of the earth; he won't let up until he's done for, one way or the other.

After seeing what I saw, I got mean enough, mad enough, or off balance enough to give that killer the cure. I blindfolded the horse, pulled a dried-up beef hide off the corral fence, tied the tail of it to that nag's tail, took off the blinds and whacked him across the rump with those gauntlet gloves. He hit the gate going fast, and burst out into the wide, wide world.

It must be a terrifying thing for a booger-shy horse. The hide sailed high, banged down on the ground, popped and crackled. It caught on the sagebrush and snapped loose to go up over the flying outlaw's back, then banged the ground again behind him.

GENERALLY, days, weeks or months later, two dried-out hides are found, still tied together, a skeleton lying nearby —only this time the horse's hide is dried and curled, too . . .

That was the fate I mapped out for Gauntlet—the name he went by after he'd killed Roy. But it didn't work out that way. He had his run without going over a cliff, running a gopher hole up his leg, or doing any one of a dozen other things that generally happens to a boogered nag with the devil on his tail.

I found the horse, head drooped, foam-covered, dirt-caked, foot-sore, and completely done in—nine miles and four hours from where he started. He hadn't gotten there by running a straight line either. Maybe he hadn't run all that time, but he'd wasted very little of it resting—from the looks of him.

I got off my horse, walked up to him and hit the spent animal in the face with my hat. He backed up against the hide, kicked it twice, then stood there trembling. There was no sign of the wicked look left in his eyes. I threw up my hands, whacked my hat on my chaps. He didn't scare. He just stood and looked at me. He was a cured outlaw.

I said, "You bastard! Why couldn't you have looked that way at Roy?"

But he hadn't and now it couldn't be helped. Many a cowboy has been killed or maimed because he didn't understand his horse, and his horse didn't understand him. One of the most common faults used to be that a young cowboy would almost always underrate a horse's ability and willingness to kill him under certain circumstances. Some of that old stock was just half broken in. Many of those horses were just plain mean. A cowpuncher just had to allow for this, be on constant guard, and not take chances. It was the young boys who got hurt and killed mostly.

I put my rope over Gauntlet's head, put the blindfold back on, and unwired the worn beef hide from his tail. I led him back to the corral.

I have never rawhided another horse. The one I did rawhide lived long enough to be called *old* Gauntlet without harming another rider.

That was forty years ago. I'll never forget the thoughts that went through my mind during the lonesome ride back to the corral on that miserable day when a pair of gauntlet gloves and a boogered nag dragged my best friend to a horrible death.

Longrope's Last Guard

(Continued from page 36)

conchoed half-breeds—she comes plain to me in the stillness. Once there's a steer layin' on the edge of the herd starts sniffin'. He's takin' long draws of the air, he's nosin' for something. I don't like this, it's a bad sign; it shows he's layin' for trouble, an' all he needs is some little excuse.

"Now every steer, when he beds down, holds his breath for a few seconds, then blows off; that noise is all right an' shows he's settlin' himself for comfort. But when he curls his nose an' makes them long draws it's a sign he's sniffin' for something, an' if anything crosses his wind that he don't like there's liable to be trouble. I've seen dry trail herds mighty thirsty, layin' good till a breeze springs off the water, maybe ten miles away; they start sniffin', an' the minute they get the wind you could comb Texas an' wouldn't have enough punchers to turn 'em till they wet their feet an' fill their paunches.

"I get tired sittin' there starin' at nothin', so start ridin' 'round. Now it's sure dark when animals can't see, but I tell you by the way my hoss moves he's feelin' his way. I don't blame him none; it's like lookin' in a black pot. Sky an' ground all the same, an' I ain't gone twenty-five yards till I hear cattle gettin' up around me; I'm in the herd an' it's luck I'm singin' an' they don't get scared. Pullin' to the left I work cautious an' easy till I'm clear of the bunch. Ridin' useless, so I flop my weight over on one stirrup an' go on singin'.

"The lightnin's quit now, an' she's darker than ever; the breeze has died down an' it's hotter than the hubs of hell. Above my voice I can hear Longrope. He's singin' the 'Texas Ranger' now; the Ranger's a long song an' there's few punchers that knows it all, but Longrope's sprung a lot of new verses on me an' I'm interested. Seems like he's on about the twenty-fifth verse, an' there's danger of his chokin' down, when there's a whisperin' in the grass behind me; it's a breeze sneakin' up. It flaps the tail of my slicker an' goes by; in another second she hits the herd. The ground shakes, an' they're all runnin'. My hoss takes the scare with 'em an's bustin' a hole in the darkness when he throws both front feet in a badger hole, goin' to his knees an' plowin' his nose in the dirt. But he's a good night hoss an's hard to keep down. The minute he gets his feet under him he raises, runnin' like a scared wolf. Hearin' the roar behind him he don't care to mix with them locoed longhorns.

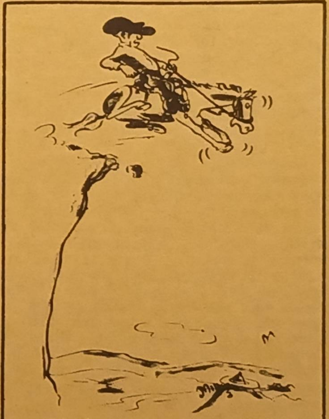
I GOT my head turned over my shoulder listenin', tryin' to make out which way they're goin', when there's a flash of lightnin' busts a hole in the sky—it's one of these kind that puts the fear of God in a man, thunder an' all together. My hoss whirls an' stops in his tracks, spraddlin' out an' squattin' like he's hit, an' I can feel his heart beatin' agin my leg, while mine's pounding' my ribs like it'll bust through. We're both plenty scared.

"This flash lights up the whole country, givin' me a glimpse of the herd runnin' a little to my left. Big drops of rain are pounding on my hat. The storm has broke now for sure, with the lightnin' bombardin' us at every jump. Once a flash shows me Longrope, ghostly in his wet slicker. He's so close to me that I could hit him with my quirt an' I hollers to him, 'This is hell.'

" 'Yes,' he yells back above the roar; 'I wonder what damned fool kicked the lid off.'

"I can tell by the noise that they're runnin' straight; there ain't no clickin' of horns. It's a kind of hummin' noise like a buzz-saw, only a thousand times louder. There's no use in tryin' to turn 'em in this darkness, so I'm ridin' wide—just herdin' by ear an' follerin' the noise.

"Pretty soon my ears tell me they're crowdin' an' comin' together; the next flash shows 'em all millin', with heads jammed together an' horns locked; some's rared up ridin' others, an' these is squirmin' like bristled snakes. In the same light I see Longrope, an' from the blink I get of him he's among 'em or too close for safety, an' in the dark I thought I saw a gun flash three times with no report. But with the noise these longhorns are makin' now, I doubt if I could a-heard a six-gun bark if I pulled the trigger myself, an' the next thing I know me an' my hoss goes over a bank, lightin' safe. I guess it ain't over four feet, but it seems like fifty in the darkness, an' if it hadn't


"Maybe next time I holler 'Whoa!' you'll stop!"

been for my chin-string I'd a-went from under my hat. Again the light shows me we're in a 'royo with the cattle comin' over the edge, wigglin' an' squirmin' like army worms.

"It's a case of all night riding. Sometimes they'll mill an' quiet down, then start trottin' an' break into a run. Not till daybreak do they stop, an' maybe you think old day ain't welcome. My hoss is sure leg-weary, an' I ain't so rollicky myself. When she gets light enough I begin lookin' for Longrope, with nary a sign of him; an' the herd, you wouldn't know they were the same cattle—smeared with mud an' ga'nt as greyhounds; some of 'em with their tongues still lollin' out from their night's run. But sizin' up the bunch, I guess I got 'em all. I'm kind of worried about Longrope. It's a cinch that wherever he is he's afoot, an' chances is he's layin' on the prairie with a broken leg.

THE cattle's spread out, an' they begin feedin'. There ain't much chance of losin' 'em, now it's broad daylight, so I ride up on a raise to take a look at the back trail. While I'm up there viewin' the country, my eyes run onto somethin' a mile back in a draw. I can't make it out, but get curious, so spurrin' my tired hoss into a lope, I take the back trail. 'Tain't no trouble to foller in the mud; it's plain as plowed ground. I ain't rode three hundred yard till the country raises a little an' shows me this thing's a hoss, an' by the white streak on his flank I heap savvy it's Peon—that's the hoss Longrope's ridin'. When I get close he whinners pitiful like; he's lookin' for sympathy, an' I notice, when he turns to face me, his right foreleg's broke. He's sure a sorry sight with that fancy, full-stamped center-fire saddle hangin' under his belly in the mud. While I'm lookin' him over, my hoss cocks his ears to the right, snortin' low. This scares me—I'm afeared to look. Somethin' tells me I won't see Longrope, only part of him—that part that stays here on earth when the man's gone. Bracin' up, I foller my hoss's ears, an' there in the holler of the 'royo is a patch of yeller; it's part of a slicker. I spur up to get a better look over the bank, an' there tromped in the mud is all there is left of Longrope. Pullin' my gun I empty her in the air. This brings the boys that are follerin' on the trail from the bed-ground. Nobody'd had to tell 'em we'd had hell, so they come in full force, every man but the cook an' hoss-wrangler.

"Nobody feels like talkin'. It don't matter how rough men are—I've known 'em that never spoke without cussin', that claimed to fear neither God, man, nor devil—but let death visit camp an' it puts 'em thinkin'. They generally take their hats off to this old boy that comes everywhere an' any time. He's always ready to pilot you—willin' or not—over the long dark trail that folks don't care to travel. He's never welcome, but you've got to respect him.

" 'It's tough—damned tough,' says Spanish, raisin' poor Longrope's head an' wipin' the mud from his face with his neck-handkerchief, tender, like he's feared he'll hurt him. We find his hat tromped in the mud not fur from where he's layin'. His scabbard's empty, an' we never do locate his gun.

"That afternoon when we're countin' out the herd to see if we're short any, we find a steer with a broken shoulder an' another with a hole plumb through his nose. Both these is gun wounds; this accounts for them flashes I see in the night. It looks like, when Longrope gets mixed in the mill, he tries to gun his way out, but the cattle crowd him to the bank an' he goes over. The chances are he was dragged from his hoss in a tangle of horns.

"Some's for takin' him to Dodge an' gettin' a box made for him, but Old Spanish says: 'Boys, Longrope is a prairie man, an' if she was a little rough at times, she's been a good foster mother. She cared for him while he's awake, let her nurse him in his sleep.' So we wrapped him in his blankets, an' put him to bed.

"It's been twenty years or more since we tucked him in with the end-gate of the bed-wagon for a headstone, which the cattle have long since rubbed down, leavin' the spot unmarked. It sounds lonesome, but he ain't alone, 'cause these old prairies has cradled many of his kind in their long sleep."

My Son Is Dead

(Continued from page 31)

At last, he heaved himself out. The shovelers went back to work, piling in more dirt. And again, Juan Ochoa packed the dirt down with the great boulder.

Three times Juan Ochoa went back into the grave to pack the earth over the body of his friend before the grave was filled and rounded over. Then, still without a word, the group turned from the grave and began searching the surrounding low hills and dry *arroyos* for stones to cover the mound. The men brought big stones, the women lesser ones, and the children brought the smallest of all, some no bigger than the stones they might remove from a pan of *frijoles* their mothers would cook. In solemn silence, everyone brought stones and heaped them onto the grave till no bit of raw earth was left exposed.

A cross was stuck into the ground at the head of the grave—two short lengths of cottonwood lashed together with rawhide.

NOW, at last, Gregorio Marufo's son was buried. Now, the silence could be broken. Now, the dammed-up anguish of spirit, the restrained tears of grief could pour out.

It started with a high keening wail as my friend Gregorio sank slowly to his knees and then leaned forward to grip the earth with his hands and let his head drop between his shoulders.

His wife sank down beside him, her cries rising above his. And then in little groups of twos and threes, the others followed them to the ground, some to kneel and others to squat upon their heels, while all wailed their loss and cried out in protest to the great, universal, unknown god of death.

Their lamentations filled the valley that was now darkening with purple shadows. Some became overwrought and flailed the air with their hands. Others threw themselves face down upon the ground and writhed with a frenzy of grief and impotence.

After a time, the sounds died away, however, and the tears ceased to flow. Those who had fallen to the ground now rose and stood silent, waiting until all were done with their grief. Then, just as quietly as we'd come, we moved in a group back to the house of Gregorio where, without a word, we pressed his hand again, then went away.

My friend Gregorio's son had died and now he was buried.

The Other Side of the Mountain

(Continued from page 21)

After their hunger was appeased, the six Indians still lingered. They stood with big brown eyes watching every move of the women as they cleared away soiled dishes and washed them. Then they turned their backs to the firelight and squatted with their buttocks to the warmth. Thus squatting, wide of knee, rears to the fire, they exposed plainly parts of their bodies which were covered by their breechclouts while standing. Women across the campfire from them took one look, gasped, grasped the hands of their young, and hurried away to hide themselves from such a sight beneath their wagon covers.

The Indians sat warming their naked bodies until the fires were low, then they mounted their ponies and made off.

The next morning they were back, not long after sun-up, ponies loaded with a fresh kill of buffalo and antelope meat. They may have been a primitive people but, when it came to selecting blankets, they well knew the better ones. When they rode away, many warm covers, shawls, and other needed articles went with them.

As the caravan made camp that night those same six Indians again appeared. And again they wanted loot. They were given food and a few more blankets and shawls. As before, they sat squatting by the firelight.

Later on, when they departed, one tall Indian who had by then been nicknamed "Hello Good," held out his hand to shake hands, a white man's habit, so the settlers hopefully figured this would be their last visit. In this they were mistaken, for again on the third night, the Indians reappeared. This time they were a little late. The evening meal was over and all cooking utensils put away for the night.

The Indians seemed puzzled, their faces sullen.They started pointing at different articles such as the saddles, water buckets and lanterns. When made to understand they would get no more of the white men's belongings, one thin fellow riding a red and white pony became angered, and so sudden were his movements the white men had no time to go for their guns to stop him. He rode swiftly among the group of women and children, and as he did so, reached down and caught the dress front of little Minnie Fox. Pulling her up on the horse before him, he galloped away.

All were so astonished they seemed not to grasp the significance of what had happened. Then the men grabbed their muskets and prepared to go to the rescue of the stolen child. The tall Indian, Mr. Hello Good, said, "No, no, no!"

As he pounded his chest, he made it understood he would get and bring Minnie back. Mr. Fox unfastened his watch and chain, showed them to Mr. Hello Good and made signs that if he would bring back the little girl, the watch and chain would be his. Smiling and waving, he rode away followed by the other four Indians.

EVERYBODY was worried over Minnie's fate. Mother and Father Fox walked, circling the fire, all through the night waiting for the sound of horses—just waiting. But it was sun-up before Mr. Hello Good returned with their daughter. She was unharmed but wild-eyed and nervous. Her blonde hair was gathered and tied at the top of her head.

(Continued on page 57)

Ostrich Stampede

(Continued from page 41)

and it wasn't long till they started going by. What did I see but Smokey, riding one of the biggest ostriches in the bunch. He was riding him from his ears to his tail. When he saw me, he let out a warwhoop, jerked out his old forty-five, emptied it in the air, and raked old Mr. Bird from his breast to his tail with his magrouters. Several dollars worth of plumes went sailing through the air.

That old bird was going home! Smokey's hair was standing straight up in the wind, his shirt tail waving like a flag. He had a handful of ostrich neck in one hand, and a wing in the other. Old Cyclone jumped the irrigation ditch and left Smokey in the water. Smokey came out, pawing his head and spouting water like a whale.

What a day! We were both peeled up and bruised a little. An ostrich can outkick any mule that ever walked on four feet. Smokey thought we were in one hell of a mess, and I agreed with him. We decided the farmer couldn't any more than hang us, so we went back to my horse, who was scared and still tangled up in the bridle reins. We could see Smokey's horse in the lower end of the field with the ostrich. Smokey took my horse to ride after his, and see what had become of the rest of the bunch. I hi-tailed it over to the wagon to see what was the matter. There was a crowd, looking things over. The teamster who was on the wagon that turned over was sitting down, holding his head, and talking to himself. The other one was O. K. He'd run back to his pal's rescue and found him buried in the hay with just his feet sticking out. He had pulled him out just in time. The man was nearly smothered.

The three of us agreed that the birds were to blame. That helped some. Smokey came back with his horse, and we gathered up what we could find of our kitchen outfit. The pack saddle was about all that was left.

We found our horses in a man's alfalfa field, helping themselves. The horse that got astraddle of the wagon tongue was the only one missing. We went back to Five Points to take a new start. We trailed our horse that messed up the deal into the mountains north of Congress. So we scratched him off our list and went back to Phoenix, and out to the ostrich farm. Everything was hunky-dory. They said it was the ostriches' long suit to stampede stock that came along that road, so the farmer didn't blame us.

BUS STOPUM
US INDIAN RESERVATION

Wild and Woolly

By CURT BISHOP

Considerate Judge

The first public hanging in Texas was the execution of John C. Quick and David Jones. From all accounts it was some event.

One hundred and forty deputies escorted the two prisoners to the gallows. According to an eye witness, "a concourse of some 2,000 persons viewed the hanging without a tear being shed."

The judge who pronounced the death sentence did so in typical early western fashion.

"The court intended to confine you to prison only," His Honor told the prisoners, "but the jail is in such bad condition, and prisoners can be allowed only one blanket each, so to sleep soundly would be out of the question. In consideration of these circumstances, and wishing to lessen your suffering as much as possible, the Court, in humanity and compassion, orders you to be executed tomorrow morning, as soon after breakfast as may be convenient to the sheriff and agreeable to you."

Tough Hombre

An almanac published in 1843 shows that on this early date the exploits of western fighting men were being slightly exaggerated.

According to Fisher's Almanac, Davey Crockett had not been slain in the Alamo; he had been shot by a silver bullet which left no wound. But the real he-man of the Crockett family, stated the Almanac, was Davey's uncle.

"He shaves himself with sheet lightning and eats pickled thunderbolts for his breakfast and hailstone life pills when he is sick. He picks his teeth with a pitch-fork, combs his hair with a rake, fans himself with a hurricane, wears a cast iron shirt and drinks nothing but kreosote and aquafortis."

It didn't take the Right Honorable Earl of Aylesford long to establish himself in the West as a "hand to ride the river with."

The Earl, seventh of his line and a close friend of King Edward VII, reached Big Spring, Texas, in 1885. One of his first "friendly" gestures was to buy out the saloon for $6,000 and invite the countryside to "belly up on the house." He served free drinks until the supply was exhausted.

The Earl spent more than his $50,000 per year allowance in standing treat for cowboys.

Judge Roy Bean, the famed "Law West of the Pecos," promoted the first notable prize fight in the early West.

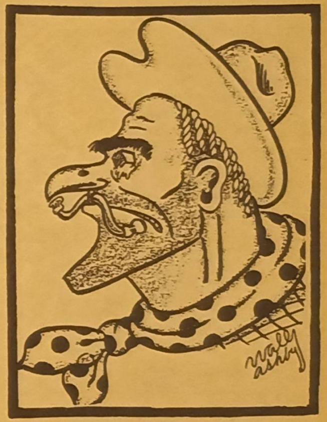
The principals were "Ruby Rob" Fitzsimmons, who defended his world's title against Pete Maher. Prize fights were banned in Texas by a special law but the astute "Jedge" knew how to get around such technicalities. The fight was staged on a sand bar in the middle of the Rio Grande River, in neither Texas nor Mexico. Bean charged $20 admission and held the beer concession himself—at a $1 per barrel. The timer used a tin bucket and a hammer in lieu of a bell.

Fitzsimmons was the winner in one minute and 35 seconds.

Ben Thompson cut a lot of didoes in his day but one of his most playful escapades happened in a Matamoras saloon in 1865.

The Yankees had just won the war (according to some versions) and a Blue-coated lieutenant was celebrating. He waved his pistol and demanded that all hands present drink a toast to Abe Lincoln.

Ben Thompson obeyed. Then Ben whipped out his six-shooter and made the Yank drop his gun. Ben proposed a toast to Jeff Davis. The Yank protested; Ben grabbed him by the throat and poured the likker down. Then, just to remind the Blue-coat that it was impolite to refuse a toast, Ben cut off the officer's left ear with his bowie knife.



"Big Gus had hair the color of new rope, eyes like ice, hawk-beaked nose, and a long jaw that tapered to a blunt point under handlebar mustaches."

Furthermore, the Yank had to pay for the drinks.

One of the tales they tell about Clay Allison, who was the first man in the West to advertise himself as a "bad man from Bitter Creek," is about the time he got peeved at a Pecos dentist.

Seems Clay had a toothache and the dentist pulled a tooth. But the ache continued. Clay went back and the dentist confessed he had pulled the wrong tooth.

Clay didn't appreciate the mistake. Just to show so, he yanked out his six-shooter and compelled the dentist to march ahead of him to the blacksmith's shop. There, using the smith's forceps, Clay yanked out every tooth in the dentist's head.

Legend of the Longhorns

by CURTIS SMITH

ON a story night in October, 1812, the great Montalboa herd of Texas longhorns disappeared. It was as if they had been drawn into the sky by some mysterious force.

The vanished longhorns became known as "the devil's herd in the sky," and, according to legend, the great herd frequently flashed across the western sky at night, frightening cowpunchers and stampeding cattle.

The story remained a legend until 1926 when L. D. Bertillion, taxidermist of Mineola, Texas, wandered into the rolling hills of Brewster County seeking a lost silver mine supposedly abandoned by the Spanish.

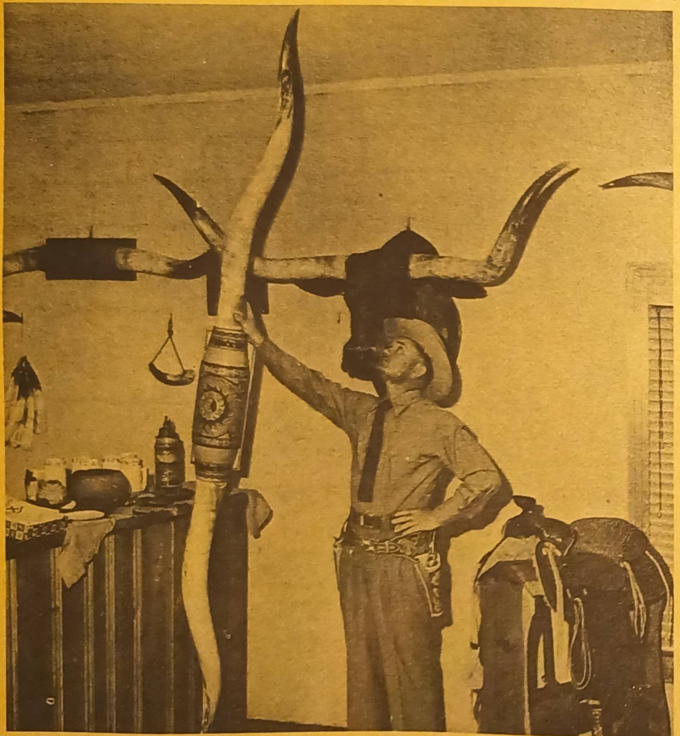
Bertillion did not find the Spanish mine, but he did find a treasure. Stumbling across a deep slash in the ground which had been sealed off by a landslide, he found a canyon filled with the bones of longhorn steers. In a near-by cave, Bertillion found many more bones and several hundred more sets of steer horns.

He selected the best of the horns for his own use, but it was not until they were safe in Mineola that he reported his discovery.

Before Mr. Bertillion's death five years ago, he often recounted the story of his strange adventure. He believed the Montalboa herd, in a wild stampede, plunged over the rim of the canyon in a heavy rainstorm. Thousands undoubtedly were killed by the fall, but he believed their bodies formed a cushion which probably saved hundreds of others which took refuge in the cave and slowly starved.

Bertillion was a native of Georgia, but he came to Texas while still a young man and spent many years on cattle ranches in the West. He became a taxidermist after moving to Irving, in Dallas County. He specialized, however, in polishing the long, sweeping horns which he sold to sportsmen. These have been sold to such notables as the Duke of Windsor, former mayor Jimmy Walker of New York, and Frank Phillips, the millionaire Oklahoma oilman.

He moved to Mineola in 1916, about the time his son, Driscoe, was born. The younger Bertillion took over his father's business and now sells more than 100 sets of steer horns a year. He imports the horns from all over the world and mounts them. He sold the longest pair of steer horns on record several years ago to a Wyoming man for $1500. These horns measured nine feet and seven inches from tip to tip. A picture of them appeared in Robert Ripley's Believe It or Not.



Longest "longhorns" known to be in existence — 9'7" long! Driscoe L. Bertillion, owner of a big "horn business," is shown balancing them.

Driscoe says he often buys horns that his father sold many years ago, reprocesses, and resells them.

Even though the Montalboa herd is exhausted, he still searches the world for longhorns. Frequently he gets them from domestic herds which are native to Texas.

Ghostly Belmont

(Continued from page 37)

culminated in gunplay, Sutherland being wounded by Walker. The latter was subsequently arrested, jailed in lieu of bailbond, and bound over to await action by the next grand jury.

The shooting had occurred May 20, 1874. On May 31, the pair made their escape from the flimsy jail. "A penknife or similar instrument was used to make a hole through the back wall," satirized the Belmont *Courier*.

Two days later the men were found hiding in an abandoned mine shaft by Sheriff Jim Caldwell and were returned to jail.

About 12 o'clock that night the sheriff's office was filled suddenly with purposeful men. Disarming and binding Caldwell and his deputy, P. E. Turner, the delegation removed both prisoners from their cells and escorted them to the basement of the makeshift courthouse. Boring a quartet of holes in the first floor above, ropes were strung over the joists and their free ends knotted around the victims' necks.

When the sheriff and his deputy were subsequently discovered and released from their bonds by Night Watchman Gates, the trio hurried below where they found McIntyre and Walker hanging inertly from the basement ceiling. Pinned to the sweat-encrusted back of each man's shirt was a piece of paper bearing the notation "301"—signature of the Vigilantes.

WHILE violent death was never long absent from young Belmont, what was perhaps her least laudable episode occurred in the spring of 1867. At that time the Nevada mines were worked largely by Cornish and Irish emigrants. Between the two factions lay an ages-old feud transplanted to this country from Bantry Bay and Land's End.

When closure of the Silver Bend mine at Belmont was ordered by Eastern directors, Irish miners employed there flamed with immediate suspicion. Work had been progressing well and there had been no indication of diminishing ore bodies. The men immediately interpreted this move as only a token close-down. Upon reopening, so rumor spread, the mine would be restaffed with Cornish labor, then procurable at a lower wage.

As the unfounded rumor gained momentum, blood grew hotter. By nightfall a surging mob had overpowered and kidnapped Tom Canfield, manager of the Silver Bend. Uncomfortably perched astride a rail borne on burly Irish shoulders, the perspiring Canfield was paraded through Belmont's main street. Halting at each saloon en route, the unruly throng collected liquid fortifications and additional recruits.

As drunkenness and mob hysteria mounted, Canfield's captors grew in viciousness until the taunts and ridicule heaped upon him struck new lows in obscenity. When his bearers elected to celebrate with their fellows at Highbridge saloon, Canfield was dumped from the rail to be held under gunpoint guard. Later as preparations were made to resume march, the mine boss was ordered to climb back on the rail.

"If you do not choose to get on that rail, Mr. Canfield, you need not do so, you know." It was a gentleman's voice and the words were spoken quietly and pleasantly; yet something in their timbre caused them to be heard above the drunken orgy.

Wheeling to determine the source of this unexpected opposition, the seething miners beheld Louis M. Bodrow, a former marshal at Austin, and a friend of many of those in the mob. Standing close by Canfield's side, Bodrow returned the men's hostile stares with calm contempt.

Voicing a foul oath, a miner by the name of Pat Digman lashed out at the ex-marshal, his iron-hard fist smashing full into the other's face.

By way of adding to the melee, another mobster discharged his pistol. Within seconds, the dark mountain street was a roaring hell of haphazard gunfire, flashing knives and flying haymakers.

WHEN sheer exhaustion brought the fight to a close, it was found that the mine boss had been rescued by friends and spirited away. Scores of miners had been wounded. In widening pools of blood in the street lay Bodrow and Digman, both dead.

To fix direct responsibility for Bodrow's death was impossible, since his body was virtually riddled with bullet holes and stab wounds. Of the two shots which had been fired from his pistol, apparently one had brought death to Digman.

Returned to his home city of Austin, the former law officer was buried with full military honors by the Lander guard.

Before 1885 the Belmont district had produced more than $15,000,000 in silver and lead. With Tonopah's rise to mining prominence in 1900, the old town to the north gradually wasted away; and even as she had wrested the county seat from Ione more than a generation previously, so she was to eventually lose it in 1904 to flourishing young Tonopah.

Dominating Belmont's ghost, as it did her glory, the old brick courthouse still stands ruggedly firm; but today finds those tall, narrow windows framing a scene of loneliness and devastation. For nearly half a century the old building has stood empty and unused but for wandering prospectors and Indians who have camped in its shade and prowled through its hollow corridors.

Across the street and a block away stands the old Cosmopolitan Music Hall where young Fay Templeton and other theatrical notables of the day presented "chaste entertainments geared to the most fastidious taste."

Elsewhere over the townsite stands a multitude of stone and brick walls—the crumbling remains of assay offices and hotels, bars and brothels, barber shops, mines and mills. At the foot of a high, scenic cliff a mile from town, pinon pines and junipers cast their peaceful shade over several score headboards, a plethora of fallen palings, and a few wrought-iron fences. Here, in these sunken graves, lie the nameless stalwarts who built a boom town high in a snowy valley between the Toquimas and the Monitor ranges.

In them the ghostly old city of Belmont has her last permanent residents.

Perpetual Motion Clock

By FRIEDA BRYAN HYATT

MANY stories have been written about the so-called ghost town of Virginia City, 6,200 ft. high in the abandoned Comstock Lode hills. It is located on Highway 17, twenty-four miles from Reno one of the most scenic drives in Nevada. Much has been said of the fabulous riches ($900,000.000) gouped out of the earth in this area, but very little has been written of the "perpetual motion" found there. This clock of mystery has been running continuously for 37 years.

When Sanquino Alves da Silva, in Rio de Janeiro, recently announced the "invention" of a clock of similar nature, William H. Marks of Virginia City, who owns the mystery clock, said: "Da Silva is just 37 years late." Da Silva's clock of clear glass is so valuable to him that he wants $110,000 to tell the secret of what makes it run.

Mark's clock has no gears, springs or motor. All there is to the timepiece are two hands attached to a mirror by a rubber suction cup. There are no "works." The mirror is a continuous piece of glass that runs the length of the famous Crystal Bar in historic Virginia City.

While a visitor frowns at the clock, trying to figure out what makes the thing run, Mr. Marks picks up a stick nearby the clock.

During its boom days, Virginia City spawned millionaires by the dozens. Nearly 40,000 people lived halfway up the side of barren Mt. Davidson. Today little more than 500 people live there.

The very atmosphere in the Crystal Bar is that of the original Virginia City. There is music, laughter and the clink of glasses. These noises have been going on for the past 86 years to make this the oldest continually operated bar in this one-time bonanza community.

The Crystal Bar is authentic in mementos of bustling Virginia City. An old guest register is opened at the page showing Thomas A. Edison's signature.

Mark Twain was also a frequent visitor in the heyday of his reporting in the hill town. The gold-plated chandelier and the crystal glass are admired by sightseers. They are lavish in their many facets of exquisite craftsmanship.

The grandpappy of juke boxes. at the rear of the bar, sets the feet of tourists tapping in step with a lively tune of another century.

TIME, the possession of it and the prolongation of it, has always been the quest of humanity. Men have deplored

The Famous Crystal

Typical scene at the famous Crystal Bar. The "Mysterious Clock" can be seen at right. Marks, its owner, is behind the bar at far right.

and gives the hands a healthy whirl.

For the next few moments they spin in first one direction and then the other in a lazy, rhythmic motion. The forward and backward swings grow shorter, and finally the hands stop at the right time, then begin their normal correct path around the face of the clock without a second of time being lost.

Your lips are all set to ask the questions, "How in the world—" but short, chubby William Marks, in his white bartender's apron, is several yards away administering to some thirsty visitor. He has tended bar much longer than he has tended his mysterious clock.

THE clock has been running constantly for 37 years. Marks has been behind the world renowned Crystal Bar for 51 years. The timepiece was bought by Marks from Frank Burke, a railroad conductor, who sold six of the clocks in the vicinity of Virginia City. All of the clocks have disappeared with the exception of the one in the Crystal Bar. It draws hordes of tourists daily. They stumble over the boardwalks, pant up the hillsides of one of the most famous mining towns in the West—and finally end up staring for long, silent intervals at the doling out of time to them for their brief stay upon this earth. And here is something that well might run on forever. The clock so attracted one tourist that he composed the following verse:

The Clock of Life

The clock of life is wound but once
And no more hath the power to tell
Just when the hands will stop
At late or early hour
Live, love, toil with a will
Place no faith in tomorrow
For the clock may then be still.

Brides of Virginia City do not consider the wedding ceremony complete until each has drank champagne from the well-known bride and groom crystal goblets that adorn the Crystal Bar. Visiting brides and grooms are delighted to help keep this tradition in operation. Other drinks in addition to champagne are served, from a soft drink to a more potent atomic mixture. And there to do the serving, and occasionally give the hands of the mysterious clock a whirl for the puzzlement of tourists, is kindly little William Marks, whose retiring nature is a direct contrast to the robust Virginia City that once electrified the world.

The Most Dangerous Game

(Continued from page 9)

warrior had been bedded down with three women. He proceeded to tomahawk the buck, then used his knife on the squaws. By now the attackers were over-running the *rancheria*, shooting and knifing right and left, yet concentrating on warriors first. Frightened women and children and old bucks were everywhere, vainly trying to hide and yet somehow strike some retaliatory blows. The Shawnees fought like fiends with their knives and warclubs, the *monteros* depending on firearms and knives. The Indians were rushing around like ants in hectic confusion, but the drift of the noncombatants seemed to be toward the lake.

"*Pinda-Licko-yee! Pinda-Licko-yee!*" (White-Eyes) was the cry.

Over half of the Indians fled through the shifting lines and got into the wooded hills, and Spiebuck raged at his men not to let any escape as they represented so many scalps which meant *pesos oro!* Many of the women headed toward the lake and soon were in it—in a vain effort to escape the carnage. Apaches are not famous as swimmers, and squaws wearing their many-fold dresses, be they made of leather or cloth, find them a hindrance in swift movement and a dead weight when wet. Soon they had waded in beyond their depth and were helpless. The frantic squaws with their children began to sink and drown by the scores.

The Apaches had their horses and mules in a bottomland south of the village along the lake; Hobbs and a *montero* named Robert Fry rounded up a dozen other men and went for the animals. They had a sharp tussle there with some half-grown boys who had been posted as guards. When the boys had been disposed of and scalped, the *monteros* posted their own guard around the herds.

"This was a far more valuable prize of war than the harvest of scalps," wrote Hobbs. "We had captured well over a thousand head of stock . . . but Spiebuck and Kirker had other ideas."

When Hobbs returned, after securing the horses and mules, he found those two hellions directing the crews that were hauling bodies out of the lake and scalping them on the shore. The carnage finally slackened down when there wasn't a body in sight who wasn't a member of the scalphunters. There were no more bodies floating in the lake and the bottom had been searched as far out as a tall man could wade. While the Shawnees and some whites began to guzzle whatever they could find of left-over pulque and mescal, Kirker and Spiebuck began sorting and tallying the grisly trophies and tossing them in piles according to ages and grades.

Hobbs stood by and watched and wondered as one pile got knee-high. "In my day I had seen a lot in the way of Indian torture, death and violence and bestial behavior on the part of both white man and Indian," he wrote in one of his few and hard to read letters, "but the consummation of this battle was a little too much for me."

He did not show his feelings; however, he did not participate in any of the clean-up work. He heard Spiebuck and Kirker reckon up a total of nearly 300 scalps which, along with the forty-three Navajo scalps taken several days previously, brought their collection to 340! He began to wonder if the Mexican governors had enough money to pay the full price agreed upon, for such a large harvest. If they didn't, there would be trouble.

When the two hunkered down to rest, a guttural Apache voice suddenly addressed Kirker from a nearby thicket of scrub-oak brush. "Why, *Don Querque*, do you do this to us?"

Kirker sprang erect, a look of animal fear apparent on his otherwise hard face. "Were we not your friends? Were you not one of our honored chiefs? Had we not always treated you like a brother? Why are you no longer our friend? Why cannot the White-Eyes be trusted?"

The speaker rose into view, his full height, tall for an Apache, and with solemn dignity, he bared his naked chest to whatever thrust or bullet may come his way. "Like *Don Santiago* did to us at the Copper Mines some moons ago."

"Mangas Coloradas!" Kirker exclaimed, then lowered his eyes to the ground.

Spiebuck drew back his arm, a poised lance in his fist.

"No!" shouted Hobbs. "No! Let him go!"

"*El un quinento peso craneo*," Spiebuck snarled in Mexican, and again the muscles of his arm tensed. "Ten times the value of those others."

"No!" shouted Hobbs. "You can have enough scalps from my share to make up for the chief. Do not strike."

Mangas Coloradas turned and disappeared deeper into the scrub oak—and embarked upon a trail that was to cost hundreds of lives in the next twenty years.

The scalphunters, after this interlude, began to make a further check of their situation. They seemed uneasy. They examined their wounded and the half-dozen dead. And where the big Mimbreno chieftain had stood in the scrub oak but minutes before, they found the body of Lopez, the Apache-Mexican halfbreed guide, his body being the only one that had been mutilated. Spiebuck snorted and quickly cut loose the scalp which he added to his tally; one of his braves came up with the scalp of a white man named Spencer, who had been slain in the battle and whose hair quite likely would pass for that of an Indian—342!

The *monteros* spent the rest of the day gathering into packable piles all the booty they could find and deemed worth moving. The usual claims were made for the properties of those slain. The piles of scalps were salted and packed into parfleches, the captured animals made secure, and a double guard posted around them. The entire party, hungry as mountain men always were, made a meal of sorts and forted up to settle down on the spot of the ravaged *rancheria* for the night.

After nightfall, the sounds of bleating sheep or goats came from the northern shore of the lake. A party was sent forth to investigate. They found a group of nineteen young squaws guarding a herd of about 300 sheep and goats—which the warriors had undoubtedly stolen from Mexican ranches—along with four captive Mexican girls about the same age as the Apaches. All were herded back to the encampment, the animals chased into the remuda area, the women surrounded by the *monteros.*

Spiebuck, the killer instinct ever uppermost within him, and his braves immediately drew their scalping knives. The young squaws and the four *captivas*, represented 1,150 pesos gold, an added bonus for their efforts. The white *monteros* forced them to desist, which they did reluctantly, and the women were herded into the big *kiva* under guard.

DAYBREAK MADE the *monteros* alert for some retaliatory action from the warriors who had escaped the day before, but when none came, they moved out. The Pores *conducta*, now hindered with the vast accumulation of captured livestock, piles of valuable loot, scalps, and the *captivas*, made poor progress on the trail southward that day.

"Late in the afternoon," Hobbs wrote later, "just before we camped, I was made the victim of misplaced confidence and in a way which did not tend to raise me in the estimation of Spiebuck, nor did it raise my estimation of the Apache."

He had been riding with the rear guard of the cavalcade which was strung out a half mile as it wound its way through the rugged uplands. Directly in front of him was the group of young squaws they had captured and the Mexican *captivas* they had rescued. In crossing a small stream one of the Apaches made signs that she wanted a drink. He gave a nod and then dismounted to fill a gourd from which he took a drink, then handed it up to her, still mounted on her mustang. He had been carrying his rifle slung over his saddle at the time. The whole company was ahead and kept on going. The squaw took the proffered gourd, took a few swallows, then smashed the gourd and remaining water over his head, knocking him to his knees. His horse jerked away from him.

"In a twinkling she wheeled her mustang off the trail and lashed it into a gallop. This enraged me," he wrote.

He sprang to his feet, drew his Paterson Colt, aimed, and pulled the trigger. There was a wet click but no shot. The water had damaged his percussion caps. The squaw escaped by the time he had changed his primers. Later he reported the event to Spiebuck and Kirker and for a minute feared he would have to fight both of them.

"That squaw represented fifty pesos!" Spiebuck roared.

"She was riding a valuable horse," added Kirker.

The remaining eighteen young squaws were kept under close surveillance that night, and the next morning Spiebuck saw to it that they were mounted on the poorest broomtails in the *caballada.*

The following day they saw smoke signals rising from nearby hills and mesas, and had several glimpses of Apache riders, but none came near enough to attack, or for Spiebuck to add to his collection of scalps. By noon they neared *Santa Rita Del Cobre* and, as they were expected, an escort from the presidio met them several miles out on the trail. They delivered their supplies as per manifesto, then spent some time bargaining with the *pablanos* who wanted some of the extra horses and merchandise.

All this required three days which gave the travelers a welcome rest, and their wounded a better chance to recover. Then they loaded up and moved south along the trail to Chihuahua.

After three weeks on the trail Hobbs dispatched two riders ahead to notify the Governor-General of Chihuahua of the *conducta's* arrival.

Years later, in a letter to a Senor Cabrillo. Hobbs wrote: ". . . that evening Jim Kirker painstakingly shaved his face clean and bobbed his hair, using a piece of mirror and his well-honed scalping knife. He also dressed himself in a velveteen two-piece outfit that made one think of a military uniform, complete with shiny black boots. This disguise was obviously intended to prevent recognition by the *Chihuahueno* governor who had offered 5,000 pesos gold for Kirker's head. . . . We all had a good laugh over it."

Five kilometers out of the city on a broadened road, they were met by the governor, his wife with him in handsome carriage, a troop of flamenco dancers, and hundreds of people who had come out to extend them a cordial welcome. In the city the leaders of the *conducta* recounted their successes and reported the loss of three whites, three Shawnees, and the halfbreed Lopez.

The cavalcade went into bivouac in the large central plaza, and the governor ordered his *soldatos* to mount a strong guard over the ensemblage, thus relieving the travelers of further responsibility.

A fandango was arranged for that night and it seemed that the entire town turned out for the event, which lasted until dawn. After a few hours of sleep, the official negotiators and civilian *ricos* arrived in the plaza and talks began.

Spiebuck was in charge of the scalps; Kirker in charge of the livestock; and Hobbs in charge of the merchandise, which included medicine, jewelry, cloth, food and liquor. Spiebuck had the scalps all laid out in three malodorous piles, graded according to his own estimate of their value.

"What d'ya think o' them fellers?" he asked triumphantly of the governor's colonel, acting as *alcalde.*

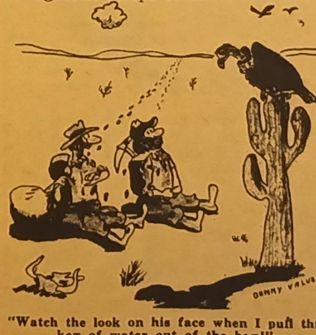
"How many are there?" came the haughty reply.

Spiebuck pointed: "This pile—20, at 150 pesos each; this pile—104, at 100 each; 218 on this pile at 50 pesos each, and 18 young squaw scalps still on the hoof!" He failed to mention that a Mexican halfbreed's and a white man's scalp were included in the 150-peso category.

The Shawnee's tally seemed to amuse the colonel and, when he said something in sibilant Castilan to his subordinates, a loud cheer went up. A group of citizens had gathered around and more were coming. The air was of a festive nature. People began to cheer. Captain Hobbs and his lieutenants were valiant heroes! Not a word for the picaresque Spiebuck. For once hiding his feelings, he motioned to one of his tribesmen, whispered a command, and in short order the eighteen young Apache squaws were herded up in wild-eyed disorder and Spiebuck pointed triumphantly.

"There—scalps on the hoof—alive and healthy—I capture them all myself!"

Now indeed a cheer went up for the valiant Shawnee. The colonel refused to receive them as scalps, however, or to pay for them at any price. Whereupon Spiebuck made another signal and out flashed knives as his braves sprang to lift eighteen scalps to show the Mexican soldiers how it was done. The squaws set up wild screams and huddled together. Hobbs shouted a command in his most authoritative Shawnee manner, and Spiebuck stayed his men. Kirker kept silent.



"Watch the look on his face when I pull this keg of water out of the bag!"

The colonel hurriedly changed his mind and said he would pay for the live scalps at the regular rate. Then the young squaws were taken into the bull-fighting arena and locked into the storage room under the pavilion, and a guard of native soldiers were stationed around the place. The four Mexican *captivas* had, in the meanwhile, been escorted into the city where they would be cared for and released to their parents when they were found.

It was customary to give the captors any booty, or its assessed value, that they had taken from the Indians. Negotiations for the selling of the livestock and stacks of other valuables continued, and when division was made, the entire party of *monteros* and Shawnees were invited to a *baile grande* (grand ball) in the nearby Imperial Ballroom.

By midnight the guests were uproariously drunk, and the local *caballeros* were hot under their *camisas* over the way the foreigners were reacting to the wiles of the local belles, all of whom were talcumed and perfumed to attract male attention and to hide their duskiness. The affair was approaching the point of violence when the Mexican hosts abruptly ended the matter by emptying all the casks and bottles of liquor upon the ground. The party broke up amidst mutterings of disgust.

When morning came with its attendant headaches and foul tempers, it was discovered that the four *Chihuahueno soldatos* who had been guarding the eighteen Apache squaws in the storeroom had been silently slain sometime during the dark hours between midnight and dawn. Further investigation by Hobbs and Kirker showed the storeroom had been broken into, and the young squaws were in a state of wild hysteria. Several military medicos were summoned and it was soon ascertained that all of the squaws had been raped at least twice, and some of them had been cruelly beaten. All of them were in a state of fury. Their innate savagery was at a point where they fought to kill any man with their bare hands.

The authorities were notified and the governor-general himself, along with his official entourage, came to look into this tragic affair. The whole day was spent investigating and arguing and all that was gained was more ill feelings, along with the knowledge that Spiebuck's Shawnees and all of Kirker's *Comancheros* were debilitated and uncommunicative about what had gone on during the night.

THE FOLLOWING day a delegation consisting of Hobbs, Kirker, Gabe Allen, Bob Fry, and Spiebuck met with the governor to receive the bounty for the 342 scalps, as agreed upon by the colonel. The governor began by complimenting his guests on their brave deeds and courage, and emphasized that the Republic of Mexico and the State of Chihuahua owed them a great debt of gratitude for ridding the land of the Apache pests.

The eighteen squaws, who had been so cruelly violated, however, he stated, were to be sent into bondage to some large *haciendados* who needed them for domestic help and who would take care of them until they were well, and trained, so that eventually they would become useful and proper citizens of the republic. He would therefore void the *alcalde's* offer of payment for their scalps, and he trusted to the generosity of his guests that this procedure would, in part, atone for the mysterious slaying of the four *soldatos.* Only Spiebuck objected.

"The big blow was yet to fall," wrote Hobbs. "When we had Spiebuck quieted down, the governor then proceeded to inform us that the official treasury had only 2,000 pesos gold in it and that he would pay us that amount and give us a voucher for future payment of the balance. Spiebuck, ever the violent one, again flew into a rage. Kirker and I had to forcefully restrain him."

There followed a period of bitter recriminations, explanations and finally sullen silence. The 2,000 pesos were paid over to Kirker, and Hobbs received a voucher for 21,300 pesos to be paid at an indefinite date when the money arrived from the national treasury.

The delegation then returned to the Bull Pen and reported to all hands what had taken place in the governor's palace. The group of violent ones was all for taking things into their own hands then and there. The concensus was to attack the palace, capture the governor and hold him as a hostage, slay all of his underlings, and thereby take over the city.

Hobbs argued against this plan; Spiebuck was for it. Kirker offered to divide the 2,000 pesos evenly among all hands. Hobbs finally won out when he spun a glowing yarn of his intentions of riding westward into the Sierra Madre where he knew about where the famous lost mine of *Tayopa* was located. True it was in a land infested by the savage Yaquis, but they would be duck soup for this band of *piel monteros*, and Yaqui scalps were worth a flat 100 pesos each to the governor of Sonora, and the vast riches of Tayopa were beyond calculation. This prospect set the imagination racing overtime, and it was decided that the Shawnees and half of the *monteros* would ride with Hobbs and Kirker, the others under Allen and Fry would continue on to Guaymas with the *conducta.* The five wounded men would return to Santa Fe and carry a report of the situation to date and a statement of credits to Don Pores.

Now here's where Lady Luck fell flat on her face for Hobbs. The following morning while preparations were being made for the party to split up and depart, Jim Kirker was conspicuously absent. By noon Hobbs went looking for him. He began to fear foul play, or that maybe someone had recognized him, and killed him for that 10,000 pesos reward. Besides, Kirker had not yet divided up the 2,000 pesos as per agreement. The *monteros* laid over another day searching the entire city.

Hobbs, not too gullible, set out looking for spoor on the outbound trails and roads. He found where the cunning renegade, mounted on a fine black stallion, had departed the night before, riding alone and riding fast.

Hobbs was destined never to see the infamous big scalphunter again, although he immediately rode out alone on his trail, determined to square accounts and to collect that 10,000 pesos gold reward himself. Ten years later, in 1852, he finally discovered that Kirker had drunk himself to death in a lonely cabin on Mount Diablo, California.

Hobbs himself continued his adventures and died in Grass Valley, California, in 1879.

Stew for Uncle Monty

By ILA H. HEALY

IN the early 1900's, men patrolling the border between Mexico and the United States were known as "Line Riders."

Glenn Chalmers was one of those early line riders. The Patrol rode in pairs in those days, as they do today. Glenn's sidekick was a rarity in the country —a would-be lady-killer. He was tall, lanky, loose-jointed and sported handlebar moustaches. He always wore white shirts with a black, shoestring tie. He was even sweet-scented. Nearing fifty, he was still a bachelor. "Handsome Jim" Gimble they called him.

Points of patrol were many miles apart, and the mode of travel was slow. Glenn had an old adobe shack at ranch "80" at the south end of the Huachuca Mountains, in the southeastern part of Arizona. He and "Handsome Jim" rode out in the morning, back in the evening—one day to the east, the next to the west.

Their larder was always well stocked with wild game—doves, pigeons, quail, rabbits and always squirrels. Glenn's pride and joy was his squirrel stew.

No one knew better than Uncle Monty, the veteran old hunter of bear and mountain lion, how strictly a mouth-watering dish this stew was. If necessary, he would ride four days, three without food, to arrive in time to slide his feet under the table for this special Chalmers concoction.

He had an uncanny way of riding up on his flop-eared mule, followed by his various breeds of hounds, at just the right moment for a free meal—not once, but increasingly often. Not to have fed the old man would have been a decided breach of western hospitality. It did get a bit monotonous. Glenn cast around in his mind for a remedy. He came up with a brilliant idea.

ON Glenn's next trip to LaNoria, their headquarters and source of supplies, he bought the customary grub—horseshoes and nails, ammunition, gun oil, perfumed shaving soap for "Handsome Jim" and a new, gray enameled receptacle. This he diligently scrubbed and put carefully aside on his arrival back at camp.

Uncle Monty, as expected, arrived the next evening on schedule, hot on the scent of the delectable stew—this time pigeon. He slid off his low-withered mule, looked expectantly at the door, opened it and edged in. He inhaled the heavenly aroma, and hung his dingy hat on a nail. Settling himself comfortably on a handy bunk, Uncle Monty began telling of his latest hunting escapades.

"Where in the devil are the pots and pans? Can't find a damn thing to mix Uncle Monty a batch of biscuits in," Glenn said.

With a wicked gleam in his eyes, he eased over to his bunk, stooped and pulled out the gray enameled vessel. This he carried, arm extended, to the door. He threw out its amber-colored liquid, hitting one of the sad-eyed hounds full in the face. Turning, Glenn set diligently to work mixing his dough—without even so much as rinsing out the pot.

Uncle Monty stared with astonished disbelief. He'd taken it in from Glenn's reaching-under-the-bed to following the curve of the amber contents through the air—even the insult to the hound. The old man acted swiftly.

Eyes agog, he pulled himself up, gulped once, grabbed his battered hat, gave a brief, inadequate excuse for his hurry, eased himself over to the door and slipped out, appetite gone. Muttering, Uncle Monty mounted his mule and was off.

"Handsome Jim" looked at his meticulous pardner in pained surprise.

"Tea," was Glenn's laconic reply.

Outlaw Queen

(Continued from page 30)

one affray he was shot and seriously wounded. Belle, free with the whip, on more than one occasion beat him severely. Ed made no secret of the fact that he hated his mother and resented Jim July's moving in at the Bend.

He evinced a fondness for whiskey, and began selling it to the Indians. The marshals arrested him and took him to Fort Smith. On July 22, 1888, Ed was convicted and sentenced to the Federal prison at Columbus, Ohio. Within a few months, through the efforts of his mother, he was pardoned.

By the time he returned to Younger's Bend, Belle had become involved in a feud with a neighbor named Edgar A. Watson. Watson, a white squatter, had rented a few acres from Jack Rowe, in the Choctaw country, six miles west of Whitefield and just across the Canadian, south and east of the Bend. As an added source of income, Belle had rented him some additional acreage on which to raise his crops. One day, in a moment of confidence, Mrs. Watson revealed to Belle that her husband was a fugitive, wanted in the State of Florida for murder.

Belle was sympathetic but, remembering that the Union Indian Agency at Muskogee had threatened to expel her from the Territory if she were caught harboring fugitives again, she began maneuvering to get him off her property.

An offer to refund his rent money was refused. The two had words. Indignant, Belle contracted with another settler to sharecrop the place. Watson informed the man that so many Federal officers and Indian police visited the Bend that there was no telling when Belle might be sent away to prison again and he would lose his crops. The new tenant told Belle what Watson had said and declined to go through with their agreement.

Belle's temper flared. She called on Watson, cursed him severely, and added, scornfully: "If you ever give me any more trouble, the *Florida* officers are going to find out where *you* are."

This, perhaps, was her undoing.

JULY, when he moved in at the Bend, was under indictment for horse stealing. On February 2, 1889, he left for Fort Smith to answer the larceny charge. Belle accompanied him as far as San Bois, a distance of fifteen miles. On her return home she stopped to visit with Jack Rowe and his wife. Watson was in the yard, talking to Rowe, when Belle rode up. He left immediately in the direction of his cabin, 150 yards away. Belle chatted with Mrs. Rowe for a while, and Mrs. Rowe gave her a piece of sour cornbread that she was famous, locally, for making. Shortly after 3 o'clock, Belle left the Rowe's. That was the last time anyone remembered seeing her alive.

The trail led around Watson's field and intersected an old road that had been fenced off another 150 yards beyond Watson's house. Obviously Belle never saw the sinister figure crouched in the corner of the rail fence. She was munching the piece of cornbread.

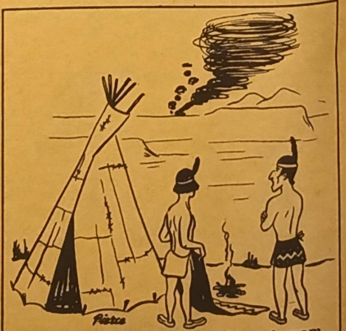
As she passed the fence corner to turn into the old road that would take her down to the ferry across the Canadian, a 12-gauge shotgun bellowed at her from a distance of twenty feet. The charge of buckshot struck her in the back and neck, knocking her from the saddle. The assassin leaped the fence as she tried to draw her revolver. He fired the other barrel of the shotgun, and this time a heavy charge of turkey shot struck her in the arm and face.

Belle shuddered, then was still. When they found her, she lay on her back, her left hand flung outward, her right gripping the bone handle of her Colt's, and the right side of her face immersed in mud.

Who killed her? The mystery has never been solved. Watson was arrested but released for lack of evidence. He left the Territory and moved to Arkansas. Later, he was convicted for horse-stealing in Crawford County and sentenced to fifteen years in the Little Rock penitentiary, where he escaped. He fled back to Florida, became involved in some other killings, and finally was slain by a posse of citizens in October, 1910.

Some believed that Jim July killed his own wife, but at the time of her death he was seventy-five miles away in Fort Smith. A few were convinced that her assassin was none other than her own son, Ed Reed, and based their theory on the severe whippings she had given him. Ed was slain several years later in a gunfight at Wagoner. Others claimed that Belle was murdered by Old Tom Starr himself.

Regardless of who fired the double-barreled blast, she died as she had lived, ingloriously and ignominiously, with her boots on—an outlaw queen, her career unrivaled in Western folklore and history.



"Just offhand, I'd say his wigwam is on fire."

The Other Side of the Mountain

(Continued from page 50)

Her face was covered with some sort of red stain and she was minus her shoes.

No other Indians came with Mr. Hello Good. He was shown many guns and made to understand that should the others return, white men's guns would make big boom and Indians would go to Happy Hunting Ground. So no further trouble came of those Indians.

The wagontrain proceeded, traveling on week after week. One day, scouts riding ahead topped a rise and halted their horses. They sat studying the low ground beyond. There were flickering reflections of sunrays on water and they made out in the distance a small lake or waterhole. Near it were several white objects alike in size.

The scouts believed them to be some sort of waterfowl such as ducks or geese, but after watching for a time and noticing the objects had not moved, they decided to ride down and investigate.

It proved to be just a stagnant body of water in a sort of sink hole, squirming with water lizards and pollywogs and circled by mosquitoes. The white objects were human skulls. They were damaged by rodents, weather and time, but there were no holes or cracks in the skulls as would have been the case had they been killed by white men or Indians. It was decided that their party had become sick from bad water or died of starvation. A mystery unsolved. After scouting about awhile, the riders made their way back across the hill to look for a better camping place.

It was weeks later before they again came to ground where they found water seepage. Grasses and other green browse grew in the dampness, so it was planned to stay there a few days to rest both cattle and humans. Men rushed about preparing a good camp and a deep waterhole.

On the second evening in camp, fires blazed high and crackled noisily. Children ran skipping about this way and that in play. Busily occupied in preparing the evening meal, women's talk and laughter could be heard from all directions. The people felt safe and happy as there had been no sign of the redmen in weeks. Then above all the noises, rang clear and loud—one single gun shot! Men jerked alert, believing someone's musket had been accidentally discharged; then arrows came flying through the air from the low ridge nearby.

The arrows fell and partly buried themselves in the ground here and there among the settlers. Luckily all missed. Men doused fires quickly; women grasped children's arms and, falling to the ground, rolled beneath the wagons there to lie holding to one another in fright. Their husbands took their muskets and concealed themselves as best they could behind small tree trunks, horses, or piles of saddles.

Soon at the top of the ridge a big white horse appeared. Upon its back sat an Indian chief, his feathered headdress fluttering in the breeze. Cease fire orders were given the men with rifles, as they wished to watch and study the Indians to see how many were near.

Seven other Indian riders appeared, as had their chief, and as each came to the top of the hill, they raised their bows and arrows shooting toward camp. This time, as the last Indian rider disappeared from sight, George Bunch stepped out in the opening calling, "Fellows, any of you want to come along? I'm going to get that black devil!"

He ran across the opening between camp and the foot of the hill, and four men followed, the nearest one being his friend, Ticer. As each man cleared the opening to the side hill, he dropped down concealing himself behind a sagebush. All hid, waiting and watching for the Indians to appear again.

It was not long before the big white horse and the Indian chief returned to the top of the ridge and halted. He raised his bow, but the arrow was never loosed, for a puff of smoke came from George Bunch's musket and a shot rang out.

The chief threw his hands in the air and fell, but he did not strike the ground. His body hung dangling at his horse's side as he disappeared from sight. That Indian had been tied fast to his horse.

George Bunch, from there high on the hill, raised his old muzzle-loading musket up above his head as he called to those below, "This is it, boys, Old Kill Nigger." From that day on George's rifle was known by all as "Old Kill Nigger."

My mother owned a powder horn which should now be with the old gun. It was carved by George Bunch who was somewhat an artist. On the old powder horn was shown a man, his rifle, a dog, a tree, a deer and his own initials G. W. B.

AFTER THIS encounter, the caravan moved on fast as possible, and was not again bothered by hostile Indians save for being shot at later in the timbered territory of Oregon. Progress was made, but when water was located more often, rest periods became more frequent. One narrow ribbon of water ran winding its way from a rocky ridge to low land, and beside it grew willows, cottonwood, and other scrub trees. Camp was made here.

Cattle were loosed to forage and wander at will. Children romped and ran here and there with their dogs. Women gave the boys and girls some much needed baths and washed their hair and clothing, while men mended broken harness and wagons, repaired broken stirrups, shod horses, soaked wagon wheels, gathered wood and rested.

Women sent their children to the creek with tin pails for water to do the laundry. Some of the children returned soon; others tarried at the creek, wading and picking up pretty rocks and odd-colored stones. Their mothers, with rolled up sleeves and faces sweating, rubbed the soiled clothing on heavy wooden wash boards with lye soap. They were tired and quick of temper when the tardy children did return—more so, when they discovered the children carried sand, rocks and stones in their buckets instead of water. They scolded, and grasped the buckets intending to throw contents on the ground.

"Please, Mommie, don't dump our pretty rocks," the children cried—and as a result the contents of buckets were tossed into the wagon beds. Then the women handed sand-coated buckets back to their offspring with the threat of using Daddy's razor strop to tan their hides if they didn't go to the creek and bring water—and in a hurry!

By evening, camp resembled a waving flower garden for clothing of every conceivable color was hung on lines both short and long. Spread over rocks and tree limbs—over wagon wheels and tongues—everywhere a piece of wet wash could find a drying space—was clothing out to dry.

CATTLE AND people were relaxed and rested when the caravan rolled on—mile upon mile, week in, week out. The days were some cooler and at nights a slight breeze could be felt. The men knew the winter season would be upon them soon and that they must find some timbered hills and water streams before making the winter's camp. As time passed, they came to and crossed over ridges where here and there grew juniper trees and grasses. Also they came to the banks of many rivers where the water flowed by without riffles. Here the streams were easily forded for the current was not swift. Empty water barrels were sealed and used as floats to get the wagons across. The banks might have made a good campground, but the wagon masters pushed on searching for timber.

It was not until they came to the Snake that difficulty in crossing a stream was met. The steep cliffs posed a problem; not even a human could climb from the top down to the water's edge in places. The caravan was forced to travel miles along the uneven rocky terrain along the high banks of the river before coming to a spot where horses and wagons might cross. The current was swift, the river bed covered with sharp rocks too dangerous for barrel floating.

Men with axes, saws, and will power searched for and felled small trees; from these they made poles for rafts. Heavy ropes were spliced together, tied at each end of the raft, and to a huge stationary boulder at each side of the river. Some of the cattle, tied fast to the tail ends of wagons being towed across, became frightened and broke their tie ropes. They fell into the swift stream and were drowned.

During the crossing, thunderheads floated overhead and the first storm of the season broke. Torrents of rain came down thick and fast and thunder and lightning flashes ripped the air. Children clung to mothers' skirts, badly frightened.

The first hard rain striking the dry canvas wagon covers sifted through, covering all within with a spray of mist. And the change from hot and dry to wet, damp and cool was too extreme. Everybody caught colds. There was earache, toothache and sore throats to doctor—but the wagons rolled on seeking a level place to make winter camp.

AT LAST, they found a choice spot beneath tall timber where the mountain behind would be a windbreak. There was level ground space large enough that wagons could be separated for privacy yet near enough that one could call and be heard if any emergency occurred. All about were stately pines, fir, hemlock and spruce. The rough-barked cedar furnished shakes for any who wished to build lean-tos or tent-like shelters. Rocks were gathered for crude fireplaces; men cut away the underbrush for bonfires. Logs were made flat for use as solid benches here and there within the clearing, so that the entire space around and near the camp wagons resembled a huge picnic ground. Some people dug caves into the hillside, lined the walls with cedar shakes and so fashioned themselves large warm rooms with dirt floors. Weather permitting, bonfires blazed merrily at night and everybody gathered around. They visited, made music, or just sat to watch the log chunks send off their yellow flickering blaze.

The supply of dried fruits, vegetables, and beans had held out well; added now were deer, elk, moose, antelope, pheasant, grouse, ducks, geese and salmon. Women gathered fruit and made berry drop-dumplings in the iron kettles over the fire. Fresh water was carried from a spring. Cattle and horses were loosed to roam where pasture was greenest and they weathered the winter well, as did all persons of the caravan.

When spring came, there were several young calves and colts and children blossomed forth wearing new homemade moccasins fashioned of tanned hide, laced well with leather thongs. During the winter, each day that weather permitted, men worked with saw, axes, picks and shovels making a dirt road up and over the mountain. On its crest there was a space almost bare of trees and brush—open enough for one to stand and survey the surrounding territory. For miles one mountain beyond another was covered with dark green timber.

Men of the caravan had labored long to get the road up to the top and they wondered if it would be as hard making a roadway down the opposite side of this mountain and beyond.

WHEN THE time came for breaking camp and moving on, some of the families seemed reluctant to leave their caves or makeshift dwellings behind. The narrow mountain road, winding, mud-slick and steep, was hard to cover. Extra horses were hooked on to help pull the wagons up the steep grades. Beyond, they ran into swamp lands, almost impossible to cross over. Wagons mired down up to their hubs. The drivers were forced to cut a thick layer of tree boughs to support the wheels. No one knew just where they were, but most believed they were now in Oregon Territory. Passing along the top of a hill, they could glimpse the sea in the far distance.

Another few days brought them near enough to hear the thumping of breakers beating the rocky shoreline. Seagulls sailed overhead and the odor of seaweed and mud flats lingered in the air. Camp the next evening was made overlooking the blue Pacific.

As wagons braked to a halt, everyone climbed out shouting and clapping hands, thrilling to the beauty of miles of white sandy beaches which lay before them. Children ran about picking wild strawberries and Indian paintbrush. As carefree as their offspring, the men took rod and line and fished in the sea.

The caravan wished to follow the coastline and did so for some distance, but eventually had to turn inland because of sheer steep bluffs. Among the hills and ridges ran small fresh water streams. The drumming of grouse could often be heard. And once again there were signs of Indians. Black embers of a campfire or the entrails of a dressed-out deer served as evidence. One of their own horses carried a deep scar where an arrow had caught him from ambush. Some of the wagon covers had been pierced by arrows, too. Luckily no one had been hit, and each time the Indians shot their arrows, the white men frightened them away with their rifles.

AFTER WEEKS of travel, the settlers came to a body of water far too large to cross over. There were many inlets and streams emptying into the bay. It was up one of those rivers that the Foxes staked claims and pioneered themselves a home. They followed the river until they came to level valley land. Here beside a swift flowing small creek they staked claims and founded Foxes Creek, about ten miles above present-day Allegany, Oregon.

The George Bunch, Ticer and other families circled the bay, crossed over at an inlet, and continued down the coast. One evening at camp one of the women decided to do the family wash. She took down a copper boiler and, discovering it leaked, called out to her husband, "Come, Frank, take this and try to patch it." He thought back to last fall when he had picked up an odd-colored pebble from his wagon bed and examined it. He had found it to be a soft substance when scraped with his pen knife. Frank figured it would be good to hammer through the small hole in the copper boiler to seal the leak. He didn't find the same pebble, but found another smaller one and was pounding it flat when his friend Bill came up to visit and watch.

Bill peered closely at the brownish metal and let out a loud curse. "Hell, Frank, that's gold! Holy Hell, it is gold! Where did you get that gold?"

Frank was as surprised as Bill. The copper boiler was forgotten while everybody gathered to ask questions and examine the small gold nugget. Wagon beds were searched and two other nuggets were found. The question: Where did they come from?

Two of the mothers told of dumping the gravel, rocks and odd-colored pebbles into the wagon beds—way back there last year as they were camped beside a small creek. Some of their husbands were so excited they talked of packing a few horses and riding back to locate the creek, but they realized that if only a few men were to go, they would be massacred.

It was decided they would settle, build a home for their families first, then later go back better prepared to stay and prospect as long as they desired. This opportunity did not come soon for there was war with the Indians. Three years passed before a group of men made the search, and they were not successful for they didn't remember by which creek those nuggets were found. To this day it is not known if others discovered gold there and mined, or if the creek were ever found again.

THE GEORGE BUNCH and Ticer families staked land and settled not many miles apart in what is now Josephine County—near Holland and Cave Junction, Oregon. George and Phoebe worked very hard, felling trees, then cutting them into desired lengths and peeling the bark away. They built themselves a large one-room cabin with an upstairs sleeping room.

The log house had but one heavy door which opened onto a small porch with two steps off. Window holes were cut through the other three walls, one to a side. Heavy shutters were made to swing shut and fasten over the three windows.

A rock fireplace was fashioned for both heating and cooking. At one side of the house a corral was built to secure their two cows and four horses. The Bunches had no more than completed the house, corral and well-house at the creek when George was called upon to help in some trouble with the Indians. He bade Phoebe and the boys goodbye and left for war. Phoebe, sorry to be left alone, carried on as best she could in her condition. She was expecting another baby.

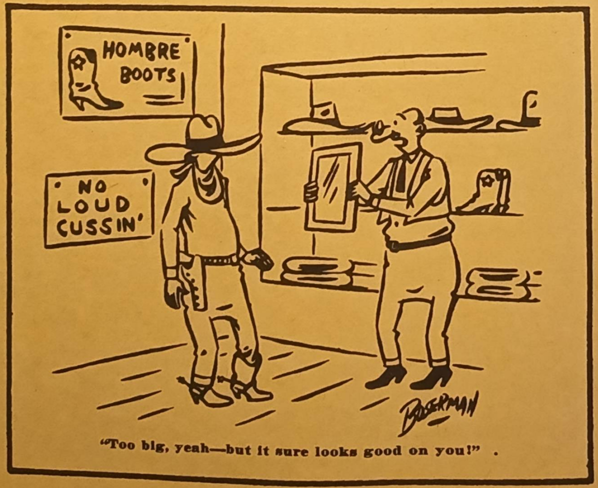
The spring house was about 200 feet from the house. In the evenings, the eldest boys carried water from the spring while Phoebe milked the cow. Then they gathered and carried in wood, lit the lamps, and Phoebe would teach the boys to read and figure for a while before putting them to bed.

One night after the children were asleep and Phoebe sat mending, their dog began to growl. She wondered if some varmint might be near. A little later she was disturbed by the dogs' growling again, so she peered from her windows but saw nothing near.

The next morning when she took her pail and went to the corral to milk, there were no cows, horses or calf—all were gone. Beside the horse and cow tracks were the footprints of moccasined feet. Phoebe was gripped by fear.

She hurried to the house and sat wondering what was best to do for she knew that Indians were near. She was afraid to take her children and start walking to the Ticer place lest they all be attacked and massacred. Her house was solid, she knew, and the latches on the windows and heavy door were strong.

Phoebe tied the dog at the porch near the door; she filled all pails and jugs full of water; she fetched in a huge pile of wood. Then the door was barred and she and the children kept within their log house.



"Too big, yeah—but it sure looks good on you!"

David knew some sort of trouble was at hand so his mother explained their predicament and told him what he must do to help in case the Indians attacked. That night, as usual, the children were put to bed, but Phoebe was restless and afraid to sleep. She packed, tamped and loaded the old musket and carried it across her arms as she went from one window to the other peering out through a three-inch crack she had left between the shutters at each of the windows. Phoebe had patrolled until almost midnight and seen nothing disturbing, when she decided to look out one last time. As she stood at one of the windows, she saw a flash and flying sparks down near one corner of the log house. Cautiously she opened the shutters a little more and made out two human forms huddled near the ground. They were using flint trying to start a fire in the tinder-dry shavings and bark along the wall.

Phoebe raised the heavy musket, ran the muzzle downward between the shutters, and pulled the trigger. A puff of smoke and flash blinded her for a moment, but when she looked again for the Indians, they were visible only as two swiftly running figures heading toward the forest. The children awoke and were loudly screaming, David being unable to quiet them.

Phoebe was still uneasy. She thought the Indians might return with guns and shoot through the chinking to injure her children. A quilt was placed at the bottom of her mother's old trunk and little Eliza placed inside. The boys were bedded down on a pallet in the center of the upstairs floor. Phoebe herself kept watch at night and slept during the day. Thus she and the children lived in constant fear of the Indians until George Bunch returned home.

SINCE PEACE had been declared between white and red men, there was seldom any ambushing and work could be resumed. They were busy from early morn to late night felling trees, slashing brush, clearing land. The boys gathered slash and piled it high for burning. Phoebe lit fires and kept them chunked to burn beneath stumps and logs.

Now mother of newborn Sara, she cared for her five children while George planted the ground with grain. The next spring, it grew tall and full, and there was a garden and plenty. George and Phoebe's family grew until there were five boys and five girls, the youngest being Amanda Ellen. born May 19, 1864. (Amanda was my mother.)

To support such a large family, George Bunch worked days at a nearby gold mine, and evenings and Sundays on his ranch. It was his habit to hunt and bring home fresh game for his family each weekend. One Sunday morning he took down his musket, Old Kill Nigger, from the deer antler gunrack, and as he left the house he called to Phoebe, "Hon, I'm going for meat. I won't be gone long."

A few hours later he returned. The children called from the yard, "Mama, here comes Papa and he's got a big deer!" Phoebe glanced out the window. She saw George walking slowly, staggering from side to side. Phoebe stood watching, realizing all was not as it should be.

George came up to the outside of the picket fence which circled the yard and, turning his back to the fence, let the deer drop over into the yard saying as he did so, "There's good meat." Then he folded his arms, resting them upon a fence post, and lowered his head to rest upon his folded arms.

Phoebe ran from the house to his side asking, "What is wrong, George, are you sick?"

His answer was low, "Yes, hon, I'm death sick. I've had a pain in my side more than a week. As I lifted the deer today, the pain came worse. It's like a knife was cutting inside. But don't you go worrying, I'll be all right after awhile."

But George did not get all right. He lay sick for days. There was no doctor anywhere near, and so he passed on, November 8, 1867, leaving Phoebe and ten children. Phoebe, with her tiny baby, sat rocking slowly, wondering, "What will I do?" As she worried and rocked she wiped tears from her cheek with the back of her hand lest the other children see them.

WORRY, work and time help to heal a broken heart and lessen sorrow. Phoebe, pioneer that she was, carried on and did well by her remaining children. Some of the oldest married and went away to homes of their own. Phoebe and the rest tilled the soil, planted and raised crops, sheared sheep, milked cows, churned, and sold butter and milk. They sold eggs and dressed chickens.

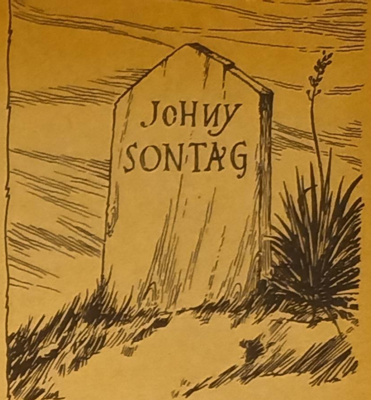
Her children walked to the mining camp, gathered up huge bundles of laundry and carried it on their backs to Phoebe, who washed each piece on a wood washboard. She rinsed, starched and ironed the clothes and sent them back to the miners spotlessly clean, the white stiff-collared shirts free of any wrinkle. For this labor Phoebe received but a few pennies.

First one, then another of the children married and drifted on and at last there was but Phoebe and the youngest, Amanda, to carry on. They patched broken fences, plowed, harrowed, clod mashed and planted. From time to time, a Captain Anderson came to the mining camp to bring freight. He drove a heavy wagon drawn by a four-horse team from Crescent City to Port Oxford. He and Phoebe Bunch became acquainted and later married. He was much older than Phoebe. but managed her affairs and helped her financially.

It was hard work and tiring for him to drive over the narrow, winding dirt roadway up the coast and over the mountain route. So often, Amanda, then fourteen years of age, went along and drove the team for Captain Anderson. But at age sixteen, Amanda, too, married and so left home.

When Captain Anderson died, Phoebe moved to a small cabin at Holland, Oregon and lived by herself until she died December 24, 1913.

The old trunk of which I have told was sent to me a few years ago by a cousin. I placed it along with a tin type picture of Phoebe Bunch in the Coos-Curry Historical Museum at North Bend, Oregon. There it may be viewed by anyone wishing to see it. The buffalo cover is rubbed thin and through in places, from the juggling and rubbing against the wagon bed as it rode across the plains. The interior of the old trunk is lined with wallpaper of that day and is now badly faded. Beneath the top trunk lid is a picture of bright colored geraniums which must have been clipped from some magazine or paper and pasted there by Sara's daughter, Phoebe Bunch, for Phoebe used the old trunk until her death at age ninety-two—in remembrance of things past.



ON THIS DAY . . .

by W. C. Carter

March 6, 1836—Killed: fighting at the Fall of the Alamo: Bonham, James B.; Bowie, James (Jim); Crockett, David; and Travis, Wm. B.

July 26, 1863—Died: Houston, Samuel (Sam), U. S. frontier hero and soldier, President of Texas 1836-38, at age seventy.

June 6, 1865—Died: Quantrill, William Clarke, leader of Quantrill's Guerillas during the Civil War, in a military prison, at Louisville, Ky.

May 23, 1868—Died: Carson, Christopher (Kit), frontiersman, U. S. scout and Indian fighter. Buried at Taos, New Mexico.

August 6, 1876—Killed: Hickok, James Butler (Wild Bill), from behind by Jack McCall. A Union scout during the Civil War and, later, gunman, law officer and gambler, in Deadwood, Dakota Territory, age thirty-nine.

July 14, 1881—Killed: Bonney, Wm. H. (Billy the Kid), cowboy, gunman and outlaw, by Pat Garrett, Lincoln County, New Mexico, sheriff, near Ft. Sumner, New Mexico.

April 3, 1882—Killed: James, Jesse, member of the James-Younger band of Missouri outlaws, from behind by Robert "Bob" Ford, at St. Joseph, Mo.

March 11, 1884—Killed: Thompson, Benjaman (Ben), soldier, gambler, gunman and law officer, in San Antonio, Texas, age forty-two.

November 8, 1887—Died: Holliday, John Henry (Doc), dentist, gambler and alcoholic-tubercular, in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, age thirty-six.

August 19, 1895—Killed: Hardin, John Wesley (Wes), cowboy, gambler and gunman, from behind in El Paso, Texas, age forty-two.

March 6, 1903—Died: Bean, Roy (Law West of the Pecos), Justice of the Peace in Langtry, Texas, buried in Del Rio, Texas.

February 29, 1908—Killed: Garrett, Patrick Floyd (Pat), former Lincoln County, New Mexico sheriff, killer of Billy the Kid, near Las Cruces, New Mexico.

February 19, 1915—Died: James, Frank, older brother of Jesse James. A member of Quantrill's Guerillas during the Civil War and, later, a member of the James-Younger outlaw clan of Missouri. Buried at Kansas City, Missouri.

March 21, 1916—Died: Younger, Thos. Coleman (Cole), a member of Quantrill's Guerillas during the Civil War and, later, a member of the James-Younger outlaw band of Missouri.

January 3, 1929—Died: Earp, Wyatt. Gambler, gunman and, sometimes, lawman, at eighty years of age.

ALASKA GOLD TRAILS of 1898

By WILLARD DOBBIN
Submitted by
MARY ANNETTE TUSSING

See Inside Back Cover for Map of Alaska and Northwest Canadian Frontier

Photos Courtesy University of Washington Library, Bruce D. Giffen, Pacifica, California, and Monroe Book Company, Chicago

FINAL HALF

Synopsis: In 1897, a party of young men, all under age twenty-seven and from widely divergent backgrounds, decided to make a run for the gold rush by way of Edmonton and the water route better known as the "back door to the Klondike." Part One covered the hardships these tenderfeet endured while making their way to Ft. McMurray, Lake Athabaska, Ft. Simpson and finally to Ft. Yukon. Dobbin, one of the party, has written of his experiences in a matter-of-fact way, without heroics but giving due credit for his survival to the party's "courage can" (whiskey) and to the conviction of youth that "Every man, going along living his life, conceives himself to be immortal. Death, the great accident, is something which happens to the other fellow." Dobbin's was a bleak and frozen world—but he kept going because over the next snowy pass, beyond the last village of starving Indians, somewhere at the end of the Mackenzie was gold.

SIX TO TEN MILES A DAY

THE WORDS just quoted well express the utter disregard of accident or misfortune to the average adventurer. We had been buffeted from one side to another so many times just ahead of so many fatalities that we were accustomed to threats of calamity.

We hauled everything out of the boats, made up a camp on the island and stayed there for two weeks until the river all around us had set fast. Now we could reach the mainland.

The agent at the fort had seen us through his spy glass in our first predicament in the ice jam. Knowing of the bad places below us in the river, natives were sent to follow alongshore to be of assistance if needed.

They watched down to the fish camp and mouth of our river, not knowing that we had put into the island. They returned to the fort and reported us drowned and our outfits lost. The outside mail was dispatched from the fort as soon as the ice was safe, taking out the news of our disaster. This was published in the coast papers; these papers reached me the following spring. This item reached the newspapers of the Middle West, where my mother read it. With a mother's intuition she would not believe it. When she heard from me later the news confirmed her convictions.

When the ice set hard enough we mushed to the main shore and down to the main camp. On the way we passed an Indian camp and learned that we were reported to have been drowned. One of the Indians went back to the fort to report the truth.

The old prospectors had already begun to mush their outfits by dogsleds, having to double-trip it, pulling a load up ten miles, leaving that load and returning to camp the same day. Our mishap in the river gave us the task of hauling our outfit to the fish camp by main strength and hard pulling over 20 miles of the roughest trail in that country. After this was done we were to move on to a point 175 miles on up the river with our camp, some grub and dog feed, enough to last us for the return trip.

For three hungry people and two dogs it was no small item. Jay got in and helped his two dogs pull his load, and I got in and pulled mine personally day after day for three weeks. We pulled and worked, averaging six to ten miles a day. The trail left by the other boys would be entirely snowed under in some places; if they had not always followed the river we might have lost them entirely.

About 50 miles from its mouth the river runs through a flat low country for 30 miles or more. Here we found some 20 different channels that had been cut by the spring floods. They all have about the same amount of water and when they freeze up in the fall it is almost impossible to locate the right channel. This stretch of country caused us much anxiety as it is the easiest thing in the world to get lost when the trails are covered with snow. In many places we would follow up the stream where we could see a brisk current flowing under the ice, then come to an abrupt ending and a gravel bar ahead with the snow blown off—a nice trail to pull a load over.

The water that feeds these side channels runs under the loose gravel bars from the main channel above. Immediately below the bars when it comes out, the temperature of the water is several degrees above the freezing point, which leaves a space of open water of 100 feet or more before it again gets cold enough to freeze. We encountered a number of these places.

In the northern Yukon flats the sun appears to be riding on the southern horizon for an hour or so at mid-day, then disappears. In the mountains it is twilight for a short period.

One beautiful morning before sunrise when the thermometer was around 40° below zero, we were mushing along through a foot of soft snow, and I was ahead of the dogs breaking trail with snowshoes, when suddenly and without warning, the ice broke under me and in I went up to my shoulders.

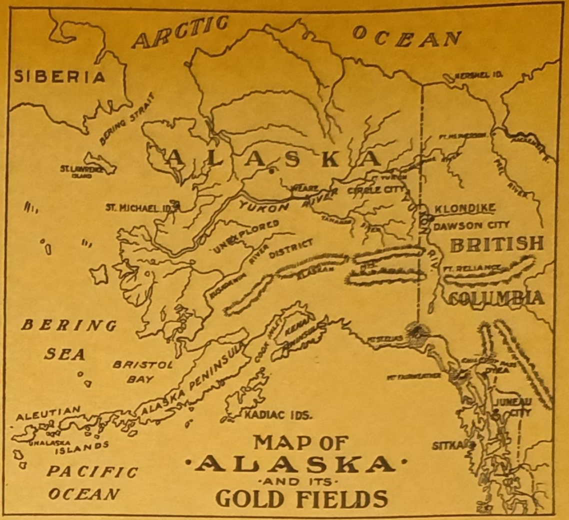
It was only by a streak of luck that the dogs didn't plunge in on top of me with load and all. Jay fished me out, took the load off the sled and put me on it; then we started on the run for camp a half mile back. We had left Jay's wife with the tent, stove and a few other things for our next load upriver.

Long before we reached the tent my clothes were frozen stiff as a board. Jay's wife had kept a good fire going in the tent and I was thawed out enough to take off my ice-coated clothing.

"Fortune sometimes favors the poor." While we were wandering over these dead channels we came to a small body of open water in a sort of basin on a large gravel bar. During the spring floods the surface of these bars are all under water and it is then that the run of early salmon takes place to the heads of streams.

Whether it is the undercurrent of warmer water or some other attraction for the salmon, this pond acted as a fish trap. It was alive with king salmon. The drop in the flow of the spring flood water leaves this basin isolated, as there is no outlet except through the gravel bars. There were so many salmon there that the report of a gun would start them jumping over one another endeavoring to get away. Thousands would be thrust out of the water onto the sand. Tons and tons of frozen salmon lay on the shores, crowded out of the water by its receding. On the bottom of the basin there were fish bones two feet deep.

We camped there for a few days, until we had killed enough fish with sticks (also shot some), to feed 23 dogs for six weeks and hauled 300 salmon 20 miles upriver for future use.



Group of fortune seekers in the gold fields

Miners' tents and log houses

During those few nights while stopping at the fish pond, we feared nervous prostration from howling wolves, foxes, wolverines and vultures. Seemingly only a few paces from the tent there were hundreds of them barking and fighting all night long. During the winter this fishpond attracted all the meat-eating animals of this district. Thousands of the musical talking ravens also made it their headquarters.

In the scores of years that the Indians had passed up and down that river none had taken the cut-off route that we had and they had not known of the existence of this fishpond until we told them. They then realized the cause of so many animals gathering in this section.

The snow around the edge of the pool was beaten down with the tread of many feet, especially wolves and wolverines—the latter's tracks in many cases as large as a plate.

White foxes were also abundant on the river but not in the locality of the fishpond as they were driven off by the larger animals. Their haunts were under the overhanging shore ice, where they were safe from all enemies, man or beast.

One thing that struck us as rather queer at first was finding all sizes of boulders frozen in the center of ice that was four feet or more thick. We also saw small fish caught in potholes and frozen into the solid ice in the same manner as the rocks. For miles and miles we passed over rocks weighing hundreds of pounds incased in the ice. Later we had occasion to see how this had occurred. In early winter the shallow parts of the rivers freeze to the bottom, and during extra cold snaps the mountain springs almost cease to flow. When the weather moderates and the springs start flowing, the water would flow down and raise the ice from the bottom, lifting with it large boulders and gravel.

A FIGHT ON THE LONELY TRAIL

WE FINALLY got to the mountains, after we had sighted them for several days and each day thinking that they were only a short day's journey ahead. The first thing that attracted our attention when we entered the big canyon was a column of smoke going straight up. This smoke seemed to be about five miles ahead of us. We thought it was the other boys and proceeded to hurry to the end of our long journey. Arriving at the place of the smoke we found only a camp of mountain Indians.

Here we found grown men and women, who had never been to the Yukon River, never had seen a steamboat or a white woman; in fact, very little of anything belonging to the white race except what other Indians had bought or taken up there, or what an occasional prospector had with him while passing through their country.

One of the Indian men could speak a little English, and we managed to understand each other fairly well. There were about 60 all told in the camp, from old men and squaws to infants strapped to boards. About nine-tenths of them were dressed entirely in skins and furs. Their tepees were made of skins; in fact, everything they had was made from whatever they had gathered in the mountains. They lived entirely on meat and fish the year around. Only when they went to the trading posts with furs for sale did they bring back ammunition, tea and tobacco in exchange.

Their supply of tea and tobacco had long been exhausted when we met them, but they had plenty of fresh meats, so we made the trade with them. A prospector usually travels with plenty of emergency tea and tobacco for such purposes so we were prepared.

The thermometer was registering around 45 and 50 degrees below zero then, and those little Indian boys with their mooseskin shirts open in front and barehanded would play outside by the hour and never notice the cold. This tribe would move every five or six days to a new locality and in this way keep up with the game.

After a day's stay we continued on our journey upriver to a point 40 miles above the camp. Here we caught up to the other fellows, while they were making a cache of their grub. They were establishing headquarters here to work from. Here we rested up for a week. We were five days making the trip down. Having so much outfit it took 14 days to get it moved up to the headquarters point, making double trips all the way.

One night I neglected to put my snowshoes up in a tree out of reach of the dogs and the next morning there were only the wood frames left. All the gut lacings had been stripped out. I had to cut down a small fir tree and make a pair of short skis before we could leave camp.

Jay was an Englishman, very quick-tempered, always sure that his opinion on all matters was the most logical and he could not agree with anyone on a subject without getting very angry at the other fellow for not seeing his point of view. I soon decided that if we expected to travel together peacefully I must not antagonize him in any argument. In other words, his was always the right way and his arguments were always the most convincing.

We would leave our camp in the morning and haul a load upriver about eight or ten miles, make a cache of it and return to camp by night. The next morning we moved camp and all to a point about 20 miles up the river to make a night camp. Next day we returned downriver to pick up the first load and haul it to the new camp.

Jay drove one team of 12 dogs and I the other 11 dogs. It kept Jay's wife busy in camp preparing food for us and the animals. To prepare the food for that bunch of 234 hungry husky dogs required some time as each meal consisted of 4 five-gallon cans full of boiled corn and oatmeal with plenty of fish in it. It was customary to feed the trail dogs once a day, this meal at night. We gave each dog half of a thawed salmon for breakfast.

One morning while we were loading our full camp outfit and in a hurry to start early on a 20-mile pull, our cook arranged a noon-day lunch and packed it on top of a load on a sled. While doing this, Jay was in a somewhat cantankerous mood, scolding his wife for no apparent reason, until she got so excited she misplaced some of the lunch. Up on the trail we stopped for noon and built a fire while the cook got out the grub, but she couldn't find the biscuits she had made ready that morning. After looking through everything it appeared as though they had been left behind. Then is when Jay showed his real makeup—he lost his temper and exploded—for he grabbed up his dog whip and started for his wife, saying: "I'll learn yuh to forgit any more of my grub by giving yuh a damn good lickin'."

I was standing on the opposite side of the fire and just stepped across it and in between Jay and her and said: "No, none of that, Jay, not while we are on the trail."

He said: "You keep out of this, I'll do as I damn please."

"Oh, no, you won't," I said, "not to a defenseless woman for a trifling matter like this."

"Get out of my way," he yelled and raised the butt of his dog whip to hit me. I grabbed it in one hand and struck him in the face with the other so that he stumbled and fell back into the snow.

That sock brought him to his senses. He lay there for a minute or so, then looked up at both of us and finally said: "I guess I was a little hasty," and got up.

Right then I said: "Jay, I've realized for a long time that you were possessed of an ungovernable temper and I always gave in to your every wish and opinion. This is a big country; there are no men within hundreds of miles; a man could kill another and leave his bones to be picked bare by the wolves and no one would ever know about it. To avoid any chance of your losing your temper again, I am going to pack both of our rifles on my sled."

He then tried to assert his authority. Being a brother-in-law of the man that owned the dogs, he said we would dissolve partnership right there. We would divide the grub and outfit 50-50, he to take both teams of dogs and I could do as I pleased.

I would not agree to that proposition. "We will divide the outfit; you pull your part with one team and I mine with the other," I said.

Shortly after our squabble over the wife-beating incident the wife discovered the biscuits tucked away in the oven where she had hurriedly placed them that morning and had forgotten them. When he saw the biscuits he felt pretty small but was far too stubborn to say a word about the incident.

We stayed in camp two days while making the division of the outfit. He owned the tent and I owned the stove. I had to make a tent out of an old tarpaulin and sail canvas. Jay made a stove out of old tin cans the contents of which were emptied into cloth bags. We then had two separate outfits and mushed day after day together and camped quite near each other at night, but with separate campsites and fires.

While we were hauling our outfit upriver with the dogs, the other boys had taken their camp outfit a few miles up the river above the headquarters camp and stayed for a few days. When they returned to the headquarters camp they discovered that a wolverine had been at their strongly built log cache.

A LONELY WOLF-HAUNTED TRAIL

THE WOLVERINE had tugged and worked and had nearly succeeded in prying out a big log. The timely appearance of the boys is what saved their winter's grubstake from being carried away or spoiled so badly that it would be practically useless.

A day or two after reaching the headquarters camp, allowing the dogs to rest, the old-timers took their dogs and returned upriver to their camp to start prospecting a creek there.

I returned Jay's rifle to him, along with a few words about that overbearing temper that possessed him at times. Jay and his wife struck off upriver with his two dogs to prospect his own creek, while I pulled my outfit five miles up on another, and started in prospecting.

Building a half cabin with logs that I found, I put the tent on top, and lived there for ten weeks alone. There was an abundance of dry wood in the country. Wood had to be cut and deviled down from the mountainside to the prospect hole for thawing the dirt. (Deviling wood is sliding it downhill with one end on a small makeshift sled and the other end dragging.) I would put in a fire at night, which by morning would have thawed down about two feet. Clearing that out in the morning, I put in another fire and cleaned out at night and so on. It does not go so bad singlehanded until the hole gets ten or fifteen feet deep. Then the dirt has to be thrown up on a stage, half way up in the hole, then again thrown to the top. When a fellow has to handle the dirt three times, throwing it from one stage to another over his head, he begins to realize what real prospecting is. Alone I sunk two holes, eighteen feet deep, and found only one color.

Fort Yukon is on the Arctic Circle. This locality we were prospecting was 170 miles north of the Arctic Circle. There for about four months the sun never gets above the horizon; it is dark for 18 hours and twilight for the other 6 hours each day. To save on my candlepower I used the fire in the stove for light to read by. I had taken along two magazines and one book; I read them from cover to cover, upside down and backwards.

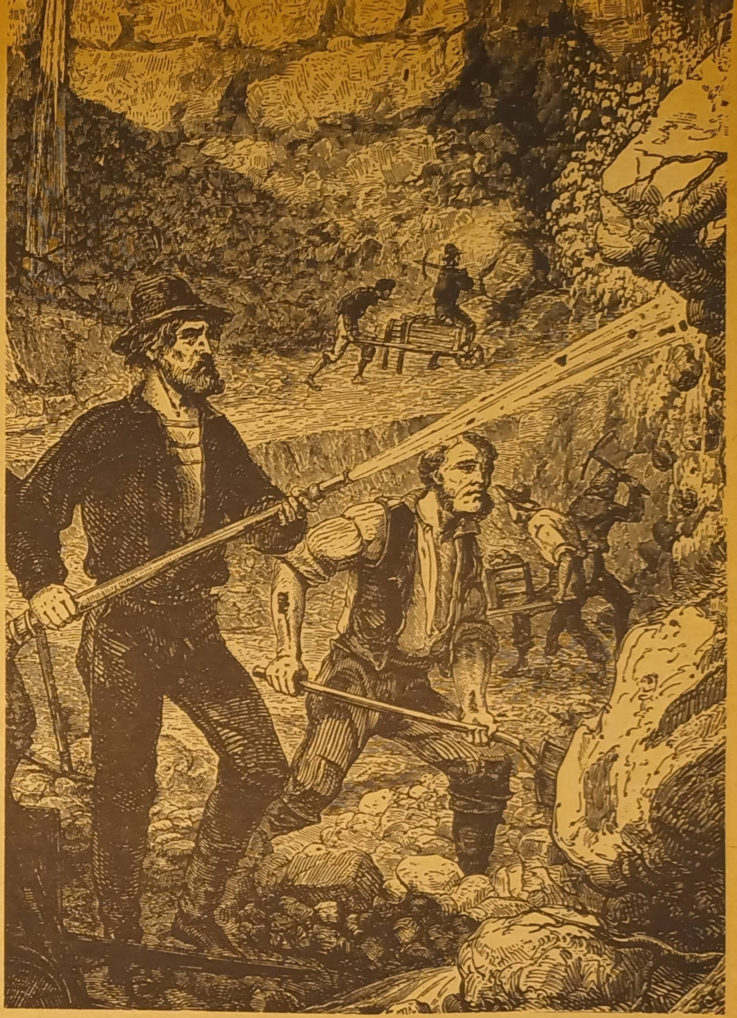
We had left Fort Yukon without a calendar. I made one, and each night I crossed off a date. In that way I knew it was Christmas. My Christmas turkey was a pot of beans and bacon, biscuits, coffee and syrup.

The blizzards would howl down those gulches, whirling the snow so that I often had to dig out the tent to keep it from caving in on me. A blizzard would visit me about once a week and last about two days. That was when I had to stick tight to the old tent.

The Indians taught us how to tell the time by the stars. It was dark so many hours of the 24, that in order to do any work, or be on the trail, it was necessary to know about what time to start. The stars forming the Big Dipper served as our clock. In the evening about six o'clock, the Dipper was right side up; and at six a.m. it was bottom-side up. The locality was so far up north that the Dipper was almost straight over our heads.

Satisfied that there was no pay dirt in this creek, I moved my camp up over the divide, down onto another creek about 15 miles farther north, and thawed down two more holes to a depth of 20 feet each before bedrock was reached. No pay dirt yet. The usual four gold colors was the result of the prospects. I thought of moving on still farther—to try it again. But on sizing up my grub pile I saw that I could not venture any farther away from my main river grub cache.

It was on that mush back for more grub that I was overcome with an all-consuming desire to see my fellow men—to see and talk with somebody—to be among the human race again. After spending ten weeks in solitary confinement, without seeing a living thing except an occasional ptarmigan on its flight up or down the creek, a man will get the habit of talking to himself at times instead of thinking. So I decided to take a trip back to Fort Yukon to see the boys and civilization, only 170 miles away, and let further prospecting wait.



Hydraulic mining—washing out the gold

It had been ten weeks since I left Jay and his wife at the main river. When I arrived there with my sled and bed roll, the same band of Indians that we met before were in camp there. I powwowed with them for a day, trading all my extra grub, rifle and ammunition, tent, stove and everything else that I could spare, for a pair of mooseskin pants, gloves, two pairs of moccasins and a pair of snowshoes. The Indians reported that the other boys had gone on up the main river about 100 miles and were still prospecting.

Loading my bed roll and about 15 days' grub onto the sled, I started out alone downriver. On the mush back I made an average of 24 miles a day, going the 170 miles in seven days. The condition of the river trail had changed very much since we passed over it on the way up three months before. For miles and miles the river had overflowed and frozen again, in places it was solid but patches had only a thin layer of ice which was sometimes covered lightly with snow. To have walked into one of these overflows, if only a foot deep, would surely mean frozen feet before one could reach shore and get a fire started. Other stretches of ice lay windblown and clear of any snow. It was on the latter kind of ice that one could make time. With my lightly loaded sled some days I made 30 to 40 miles. On other days ten miles was the best I could do on account of poor light, overflows and storms. The overflows often caused the ice to heave up, making it impossible to travel.

The fact that I had no gun now made me all the more timid. At several places on the river I came upon fresh tracks of wolves and wolverines which were on the trail ahead of me. The wolverine tracks can be mistaken for the grizzly bear, but knowing and feeling confident that there were no grizzlies in that region gave me courage. It was not without many anxious hours of travel with fear of being attacked by a band of wolves, that I passed those localities, and when I made camp at night, would lie down to sleep behind a barricade of pine boughs on one side and a big log fire on the other.

About half way down the river I came to a huge pile of driftwood that had lodged at the head of a small island during spring floods. There were thousands upon thousands of heavy stick timbers in that pile. Through a mere fancy to see a big fire, for I knew it could not get across the wide river channels surrounding it onto the main land, I set the pile on fire. It did no harm other than deprive the wolves of a hiding place. The next spring flood would pile the island full of fresh stick timber again anyway. After lighting the fire at noon, I stayed there for a couple of hours to see it well started, then took the trail again. That night I camped about ten miles downriver. At my camp the sky was lighted up almost enough to read by, and for three days I could see the column of smoke curling up into the sky 60 miles away.

I was traveling now in the Yukon basin, which is a flat country and no doubt originally was a vast lake about 250 miles across, until an outlet was cut through at the Ramparts at the lower end. Circle City is on the upper end at the end of the mountains, where the Yukon River enters through a deep canyon and spreads out into a half dozen different channels.

I BECOME A STEAMBOAT DECKHAND

ON THE seventh day I reached the big river 30 miles below Fort Yukon. Facing the glaring white snow in the sunshine brought on a mild case of snow blindness and by the time I reached the river, my eyes were of almost no use to me. Snow blindness feels as though one's eyes are full of hot sand. One must use pine boughs or something colored in front of the eyes in order to see at all.

The trail ran angling over to the opposite side of the river. Following it I came to a woodchopper's cabin. When I arrived they could not see whether it was a white man or an Indian because of the way I had my face covered with pine boughs stuck under the front of my cap. Many a man had to camp all day and travel only at night when he had a severe case of snow blindness. A musher is always welcome at a woodcutter's cabin as he can give the latest news of the trail.

These men were cutting cordwood to sell to the steamboats during the summer months. Some of them had a good trade, getting $10, $12, $15 and as high as $20 a cord for their wood.

Of course, in the Yukon flats they had to take their chances in locating a wood camp at a point that would be on the steamboat channel the next summer, because in the spring breakup the ice will jam at the head of an island and overflow into some dead channel. The ice turning through this new passage would create a new deep waterway, leading off two or three miles from the old boat channel, leaving a pile of 200 or 300 cords of wood a couple of miles back from the water highway.

The river cut a new channel a few years after Fort Yukon was built, making the main boat channel from upriver almost a mile away. The boats get up to the post by a dead channel from below and then have to pull downstream again for five miles to meet the main river.

After spending a day with the woodcutters, getting my hair and beard reduced to respectable proportions, I mushed up to the Fort. You may be sure my arrival there created some interest, after being on a prospect tour all winter up in a new country, as there are always plenty of men hanging around camps just waiting to stampede to a new location or gold strike.

The next day after my arrival I got a job as "Shavins" in a steamboat, the *John Healy*. ("Chips" is the ship's carpenter, and "Shavins" is his helper.) Here I had my first stove-cooked square meal in six months. The ship's cook outdid himself in preparing wholesome grub for the hungry crew. And I was most hungry of the crew for a week after arriving off the trail of over 1,400 miles.

This boat was headed upriver for the Klondike the fall before, but had to pull into winter quarters here. They unloaded 70 tons of flour and canned goods at the post, then went into a dead channel and froze in.

During the two months after my arrival they were still locked in the ice. The boat had to be painted and all repaired ready for another season's grind up and down the river. Up to the time I came it had been so cold all winter that the crew just hugged the stoves. It kept half the crew cutting and hauling in wood to keep them warm.

As it neared spring, during the evenings around the stove, the crew began to cheer up and talk. There were four or five old salt water sailors, real old tars, who could spin interesting yarns. One of them was a man of 60 years, Johnny Owens by name, who had been a cabin boy on a slave ship, "black birding" he called it, in the South Seas. They used to bribe a tribal chief to get them a few hundred natives from some other tribe, chain them below decks, sail to Asiatic ports and sell them.

Some of these sailors had spent a few seasons on whaling ships in the Arctic Ocean. They too had tough yarns to tell of life on a whaler, with a mixed crew of wharf rats of Italians, Portugese, Spanish and Mexicans, to whom a knife was always the main point of such an argument.

Such was the life of those professional sailors. Each was trying to get to the Klondike and get rich so they could leave the sea and settle down in a cottage with a piece of land until the lure of the sea coaxed them back again.

By this time the daylight had lengthened so that after supper we yet had a couple of hours of twilight. The Post Indians would come up to visit with us while we were off duty.

The captain, chief mate and chief engineer would sit upstairs in their cabin and sing with an old phonograph they had. It was a machine that had a reproducer on it. The thought occurred to me that it would be fun to have the Indians see "the machine that talks." I went and interviewed the captain and he invited everybody, Indians and all, up to the main cabin. After we were seated he wound up the little box, while we white men watched the Indians' faces.

When the captain turned on the music it almost started a panic. The Indians looked at us with frightened faces at first, then began to calm down as their fears of ghost talk faded and they began to realize that a joke was being played on them by the white man. They came up to examine and walk all around the phonograph, intently watching it producing music, yet not believing that music and the human voice could come out of a box.

The captain thought that to convince them he would have to reproduce their own voices, so he rigged up the reproducer and started it. At the same time he called the big chief up close and began talking to him, asking questions so that the Indian's voice was recorded. Then he reproduced the conversation. All the Indians heard the questions and answers—then heard them come out of that box. The old chief's eyes bulged as he looked at the box and listened to his own voice. To them it was just another unsolved mystery that the white man had introduced into their primitive lives. When the captain dismissed them it did not take long for 30 scared Indians to get through a single doorway and put on to land again.

Just before the river broke up, the first mail of the winter arrived from the outside by dogteam. It was the second batch that had started from the head of the river. The first mail packet was lost through the ice in an open waterhole during a heavy blizzard, for the mail has to go regardless of the weather.

It was two months after I went to work before the boat cleared of the ice and backed down to the post to load up. We loaded the cargo and food for the boilers. The type of power on these river boats is similar to that used on the common steamboat except that the fire box is twice as large and will hold nearly a half cord of four-foot wood at a time. And how they do eat up the fuel while going upstream! We went back downriver to get into the main channel.

Circle City is 75 miles up the river from Fort Yukon, the most exciting and interesting 75 miles I ever rode. The river was nearly full of drifting ice coming down with a swift current, while we were trying to go up, dodging here and there, trying to get through between huge chunks of ice, sometimes striking a chunk as big as an acre head-on. If we were not holding onto something, the jolt we got would send everyone sprawling on the deck and tip over the woodpile. Sometimes we could not get past the ice pack and would be taken back downriver a few miles before getting out of the mess.

GOLD DIGGINGS AT LAST

THE PROW of the boat was extra reinforced and the big stern paddle wheel was ironed for protection from the ice and driftwood that were coming down the river. The captain wanted to get into Dawson first in the spring with a cargo of goods, as the prices there were sky high.

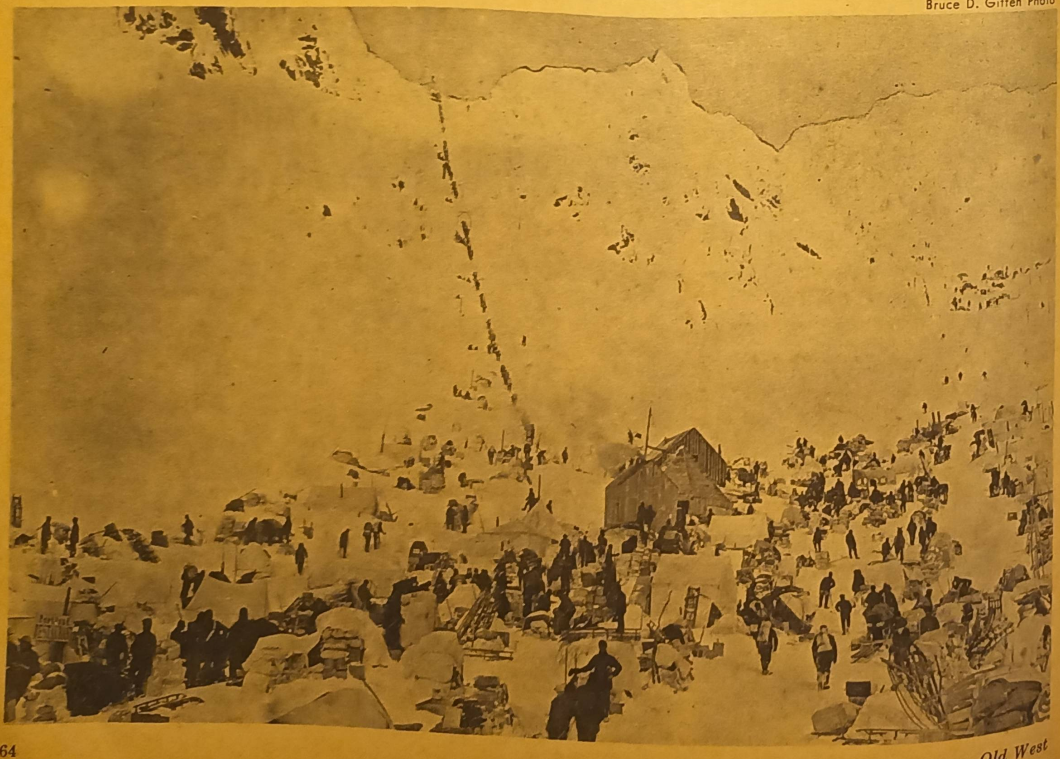
We finally reached Circle City, after stopping to take on wood four or five times, 16 cords at a time. This had to be packed on our necks, from 100 to 200 feet offshore and there were only eight of us deckhands to pack it.

Circle City was then the outlet camp for the Birch Creek and Mastodon diggings, where there were quite a number of placer mines, or what they call grubstake claims. Three of the old prospectors whose dogteams we had used going up the Chandalar River the fall before were old-timers in the country and each had a claim out on Birch Creek.

They had spent nearly every other winter there, getting out their dump of pay dirt to wash up in the spring. The creek they were on was so geographically located that the north winds drifted in the snow from the divides north of it, where there was no timber. The boys said that before spring their cabin was under 25 feet of snow and that they had put up 15 feet of extra stovepipe to reach up through it. After each snowstorm they had to move their grub cache higher up in the trees out of reach of their dogs. When spring came and the snow went off, their grub and sleds were hanging in the trees 20 feet off the ground. The old prospectors had placer claims like these for their bank accounts. In that way they would clean up enough dust to keep them in grub for another two years. Then they would

Chilkoot Pass. Note packers ascending the almost perpendicular slope to the distant summit.

Bruce D. Giffen Photo



A public building in Circle City

Bruce D. Giffen Photo

go prospecting for richer pay dirt.

It is over beyond this district a little way that the Fairbanks mining district is now located, which is near the head of the Tanana River, which flows into the Yukon River about 400 miles below Fort Yukon.

Circle City got its name in the early days when the fur traders had possession of that country from being situated near the line of the Arctic Circle, but after the international surveyors were in there, they found that the line ran across just 32 miles south of Fort Yukon, leaving Circle City about 40 miles south of the Arctic Circle.

Before leaving Fort Yukon the English missionary who had been located at that post since the early fur trading days decided that his efforts toward making a pious community out of roughneck miners and adventurers was all in vain and that he had better move to greener pastures over in Canada. He packed his household effects and moved everything, his family of seven orphan Indian kids, housekeeper and all, taking our steamer up to old Forty Mile Post, which is a mining town just inside of the Canadian line.

Forty Mile got its name before the present international boundary line was established. The town was just 40 miles on the Canadian side of the old or first boundary line. The creek or river that furnished the gold diggings for Forty Mile was originally all in Canadian territory, but the new survey cut off most of the mining and left it on the Alaska side.

This gold district was discovered several years before the Klondike. When the big gold strike was made in the latter place and government officials moved in, the miners on the upper Forty Mile River resented very much any interference with their right to pack a gun, or to shoot up the town occasionally, or to pay a 15 per cent royalty on gold mined, to the Canadian Government, so they established a town of their own just inside the American line and called it Eagle City.

Circle City had been established years before the big strike and was the headquarters for the mining and prospecting being done in the whole middle Yukon country. The four prospectors who owned the dogs that Joe and I used that past winter had mushed up the Yukon from Circle City to the Klondike River nine years before the big strike was made. They were working a rocker on some bar diggings over on the Indian River, and had mushed up over the famous Bonanza and Eldorado Creeks several times while going to and from their diggings, never dreaming that their trail was underlaid with a foundation of gold 10 to 20 feet under them.

We finally arrived at Dawson. When the boat's whistle blew from downriver, it brought every man, woman and dog down to the riverbank, because ours was the first boat into Dawson that spring with fresh canned goods. Most every one on shore craved canned tomatoes and peaches. They had been so long without fruit juices that our boat, with its load of all kinds of canned goods, was surely a welcome sight.

After we got the cargo ashore, the boat prepared to pull downriver to St. Michaels for another load. The boat's officers had some difficulty in getting a new crew to go back, as nearly all the deckhands wanted to go mining. They were offered double pay for the round trip. "We came to dig gold, not to carry cordwood," was their reply.

That boat was doomed not to reach the sea in time to come up with another load that year. About 20 miles below Dawson she ran onto a sand bar while going full speed ahead downriver. She didn't get off for nearly two months; the river kept dropping as fast as they could dig her out.

That is how I got into Dawson and the Klondike.

While unloading the steamboat, I met an old friend from my hometown back in the States. He was the first old-time acquaintance that I had met in all Alaska up to that time, and I was overjoyed at seeing him. He and his brother Al had arrived one year ahead of me, having come in over the celebrated Chilkoot Pass with the big '98 rush and shared all the hardships and excitement with the army of prospectors and mushers that came over the upper Yukon trail.

They took me into their cabin to live with them. For days and days we exchanged yarns of our experiences in our effort to get into that gold country.

Well, here we were at the seat of the greatest gold camp that was ever discovered in the world. They had been in there a year, and in time to get a claim away on the hillside of Bonanza Creek, the creek on which pay dirt was first discovered in the Klondike.

In Canada (Dawson is in Canada), the Yukon placer mining creek claims consist of a varied number of acres, as the claim stakes read: "500 feet up or down the creek bed, and from rim to rim rock, on each side."

My friends' claims were what they call "bench" claims, 500 feet by 250 feet wide, second, third or fourth tier, opposite, say, No. 10 above discovery, right or left bench. One of their claims was second tier bench, right, opposite No. 8 below discovery on Bonanza. The other claim was first tier, No. 5 above lower discovery, left, on Dominion Creek, 45 miles over the mountains from Dawson.

We hung around Dawson for some time to take in all the sights, and believe me, there were a-plenty. Nearly every nationality in the world was represented there, high, low and intermediate castes of humanity, and had it not been for the Canadian Mounted Police, which represented law and order (and I don't mean anything else but), there would have been many more men die an unnatural death.

DIGGING GOLD IN THE KLONDIKE

THE TOWN of Dawson consisted mostly of saloons, gambling and dance halls, and all were well patronized. There were two large trading stores and about one each of the other kinds of business.

The main street, running up and down the river, was laid out hit or miss, with no view to future civic beauty. The streets were crooked, some stores several feet higher than others, with sidewalks full of steps, here and there big slabs of granite of old Mother Earth sticking up. The town was teeming with excited miners, going from one place to another. Those who had gold sacks in their jeans were headed for a gambling house; those that had none were going there too for excitement.

On the main trail leading out of town there were hundreds of men mushing. Those outward bound were loaded with heavy packs; those coming in had only their light pack harness and probably a full sack of dust in their pockets. But all had happy expressions as they neared the town, where there was plenty of excitement and drink.

After listening to the boys for about a week, telling what had happened on the trail and out on the pay creeks, I was ready to hit the trail again. We filled our packs with a month's grub and mushed out onto the celebrated Bonanza Creek, the creek that produced the richest placer mines in the world, and there I saw the first real gold mining done.

Bonanza Creek is a branch of the Klondike River, and flows into it two miles up the Yukon. Bonanza is about 18 miles long, with branches or pups, as the miners call them, coming in from both sides all the way up. The rich Eldorado Creek comes into it 13 miles up from the mouth. There was only a footpath to get there on; there were no wagon trails in that country. The trail ran over the creek a dozen times, scaling the walls of rock on narrow ledges, through brush, over piles of washed-out tailings where they had sluiced out their pay dump with the first spring water.

The dump is what they had dug out during the winter, where they have to build log fires down in the bottom of the shafts to thaw every shovelful of dirt, then hoist it to the surface with a windlass. Bed rock on Bonanza Creek is from 10 to 20 feet deep. The shaft is sunk to bedrock, then drifting is started (the same as is done in a coal mine) following the pay streak. The pay dirt on this creek was very rich, panning from $50 to $600. Some claims on Eldorado produced as high as $1,000 to the pan, with the pay dirt six inches to a foot deep and 5 to 25 feet wide. An ordinary gold pan of gravel will weigh 25 pounds, and a yield of $1,000 in gold means 62 ounces, or nearly one-sixth of the entire bulk, in precious metal.

There were many claims being worked in open cuts, shoveling into sluice boxes. A sluice box is made up of three boards, 10 feet long, nailed together so as to make a long trough, 12 inches square inside. About 6 or 7 of these troughs are placed end to end to fit watertight, and at a pitch of slope of 10 inches to each length, to create a swift flow of water through the trough. In the bottom of the boxes are slats or riffles, made in five-foot sections, so they can be easily removed to clean up the gold after a period of 10 to 24 hours of shoveling into the sluice.

Many claims cleaned up over $100,000 from their winter's digging. Creek claims on Bonanza, Eldorado, Boulder, Sulphur, Dominion, Hunker and many of the little tributaries yielded from $5,000 to $80,000 at their spring's clean-up. The claims up on the hillsides did not do so well, as they were mostly summer diggings, but if they had had the water to wash up with sluice boxes the clean-ups would have been nearly that of the creeks.

As far as the eye could reach up and down the creeks, also far up on the hillsides, thousands of men were busy, digging and washing out gold dust, making one think of a bee-hive. The men on the hills were using the old-style rocker to wash them out with, owing to the scarcity of water, as we had to use the same water over two or three times. The rocker is a contraption similar to a child's cradle. It has a small box on top with small holes in the sheet iron bottom, two sloping boards with cleats nailed across and covered with strips of blanket. Shallow pockets are formed at the cleats which catch the heavy gold, while the gravel and dirt wash out.

First fill the box with pay dirt, pour in water with a large dipper while rocking back and forth, until all small particles are washed through, then dump the hopper and repeat the operation. It is well to take a look through the stones before dumping as there might be a nugget too large to go through the small holes in the hopper. It was encouraging to take a look at the blanket once in a while and see the yellow streaks pile up in the riffles. Seeing the yellow streaks forming in his rocker gives a man a thrill. When a half-day's run is made, the blanket is taken off and turned upside down in a tub of water. All the gold drops off and is easily cleaned in a gold pan.

My friends had such a claim and we three had to work our shift during the night hours. Our little stream of water, about as big as one's finger, was muddy in the daytime from being used half a dozen times by other miners higher up the hillside. The nights were as light as day—the midnight sun took care of that.

With our primitive outfit and small stream of water we would clean up $50 to $100 of dust in the mornings, some quite coarse gold. We got many nuggets that ran from 50 cents to $1 and some as high as $5, one $8 and one $17—this was the largest. The pay dirt on this claim ran pockets near the surface. When one pocket was cleaned up, which would probably last us two or three nights, we would have to prospect around to find another. When we had put in about two weeks rocking and cleaning up, the water played out. This claim was too high up to attempt to carry water, so we had to give it up and look for another pay streak. However, we cleaned up a nice grubstake while there.

Our next plan was to go back to town and look up another claim owner who was not a miner by profession, that is, a storekeeper, gambler, saloonkeeper or doctor, who had acquired mines by grubstaking prospectors. (The law of miners gives a half interest in all claims staked to the donor of said grub.) These town owners are often anxious to have their claims prospected and opened.

We got three days (lease) from a merchant, one at 30 per cent on Boulder Creek 15 miles from Dawson, one at 60 per cent on Sulphur Creek, 38 miles out and one at 60 per cent (a first night bench) opposite No. 2 below upper discovery on Dominion Creek, 40 miles over the mountains from Dawson. The percentage depends on the locality of the claim, whether or not it lies in the vicinity of paying claims.

One of my partners was offered a job as bookkeeper for the Bartlett Pack Train Company at a fancy salary. He decided to work for sure pay and let us do the prospecting until we found something to pay him better. We got our packs of grub ready, and loading about 12 pounds on each of our three dogs, struck out.

The dog pack harness is made of wide pieces of canvas with pockets. With packs 70 to 80 pounds each, we headed up over the summit of Bonanza Creek. On the way we walked over millions of dollars worth of gold dust still lying on the bottom of the creek unwashed. Frantic miners worked their sluices to get out all they could before the short summer season closed in and frost stopped sluicing operations.

Getting up as far as the Forks, where Eldorado Creek comes in, we took a stroll to see the operation of the most famous and richest placer mining creek in the world. It did not look much different from other creeks, but when we talked to some of the miners, and saw their baking power cans and five-gallon oil tins full of gold dust standing around their cabins uncovered and unguarded, large nuggets lying on the window sills, while their grub pile was hidden under their bunks, under heavy guard, we realized how rich this creek was.

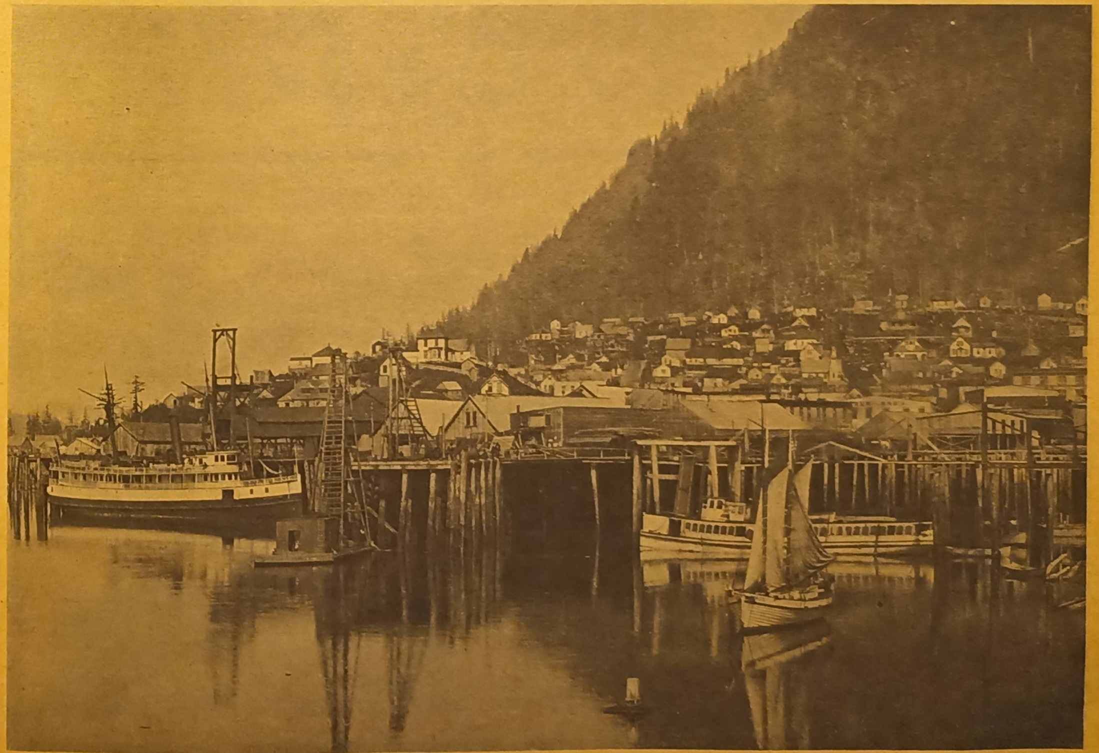
GOLD MINES AND MINERS

ONE MAN, nicknamed The Lucky Swede, had two large five-gallon oil tins filled with gold dust waiting for a pack train of mules to come up and pack it into Dawson. A 30-mule packtrain made a weekly trip up the creeks with grub and back with gold dust. They pack each mule with 300 pounds of gold dust—about $65,000.

The Lucky Swede bought this claim for $800, money that he had worked hard for. But he had been celebrating and a

Circle City waterfront

Bruce D. Giffen Photo



couple of gamblers sold him a "moose pasture claim." When he realized what he had done, he sat down and cried over the loss of his money.

Lucky thought he would give the claim a prospect anyway now that he had it. His was the first claim on that creek to be prospected and no one knew there was any pay dirt on it. When he got to the bottom of his first prospect hole he nearly went crazy with his discovery. The first pan that he washed weighed out $400. Afterward he took out many pans that ran as high as $1,000. A few days after his first discovery he was offered $500,000 for his claim. At the end of his second year's work, he had cleaned up over $2,000,000 out of his "moose pasture."

Claims for two miles or more around his were almost equally rich. From the Fork down Bonanza Creek for 13 miles the claims were very productive.

On another claim farther up we stopped to watch them clean up a sluice box. When the riffle slats were removed and the gravel and sand cleaned out there was about a gallon of coarse gold left, over $20,000 worth.

At another mine we talked with the foreman of a gang of men shoveling into a sluice box from a dump taken out of the creek bed during the winter months. The foreman showed us how rich the dump was by dashing a pail of water against it, and said, "Take a look at that." We were amazed at the sight. The water washed off the dirt, exposing the gold. To us it looked like a pile of gold with a little dirt in it. I cannot describe it better than to say that if one took a pail full of dirt and threw into it a handful of wheat, corn and beans, that would represent the size of the nuggets that could be seen all over that pile of pay dirt that the men were sluicing. The foreman would pick up a nugget back here and there and talk about the work, then throw those nuggets back into the pile of dirt as though they were common stones.

We passed on, after all this excitement, full of hope that some day our pay dirt would be as good as this. Climbing over ridge after ridge, we finally reached the summit. Then we went down, down, until those loads almost broke our backs. There is no punishment worse than going downhill two or three miles long with a heavy pack.

Sulphur Creek was our destination. Our claims were 38 miles from town. This divide separates the Klondike region and the Indian River slope.

Sulphur Creek had some fairly good paying claims but nothing as rich as Eldorado or Bonanza. Every foot of the way out we could see claim stakes in all directions. The stampeders of the big '98 rush had staked out claims on every creek and hilltop for 50 miles back from Dawson.

Our claim was a bench, opposite No. 2 above Discovery, and looked good to us before we started to open it up. We learned that No. 2 creek claim was a blank. We figured that a landslide in the past had slid down onto the creek and gradually forced it over to the other side, leaving the old creek and pay streak under our bench claim. We went to work with vim. Our first hole we thawed down for 30 feet through frozen dirt to bedrock, which was pitching toward the creek. No pay. We moved downhill about 50 feet and sunk another hole about the same depth. The bedrock pitched back uphill, still no colors. But if we could get into the trough on bedrock it surely would be there.

We did not give up. We put a hole down 35 feet right into the trough. Not a color. Still we did not lose faith in that claim. We went down to our line and put down the fourth hole, about 25 feet. Still no pay dirt. We were about ready to say something by this time; I presume we did. Each of those holes had taken over a week to thaw and dig.

Our method of thawing was more dangerous than that generally used in winter work but much faster. We would heat a dozen boulders red hot over a brush fire, and lower them into the hole, then cover with moss from the tundra. It was my job to be in the bottom to place them. The man above at the windlass would place two or three red-hot rocks in the bucket, then yell, "Look out below." My protection from being hit on the head with hot rocks, crouching in the corner of a hole three by five feet square, was my shovel. Should the rope break or the bucket tip over, the consequences would have been serious.

This method thawed down about two feet every six hours and while we were cleaning out one thaw the rocks were being heated for the next operation, and so on until the bedrock was reached.

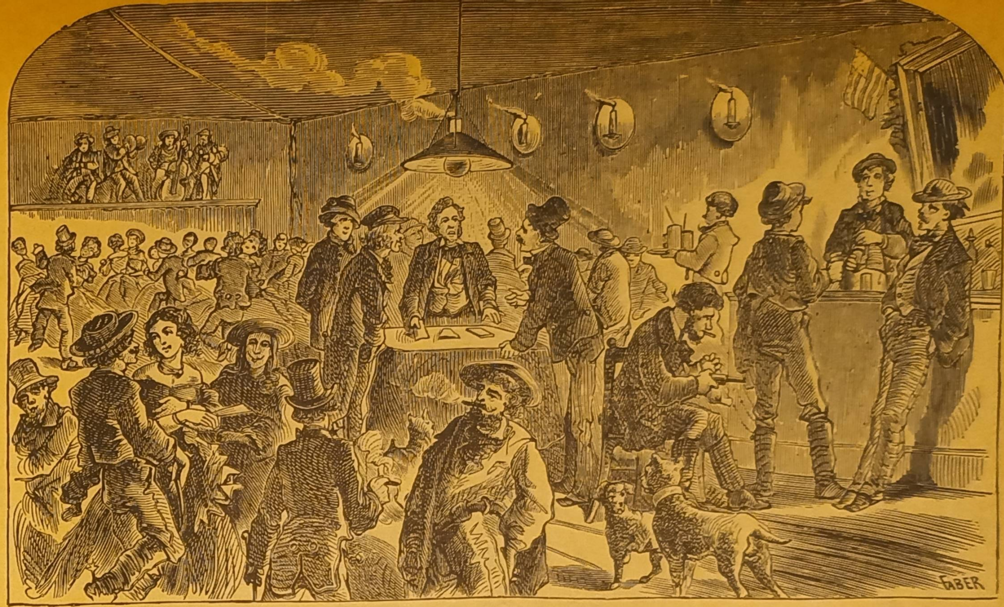
While sinking the holes we had an unlooked-for experience. Our dogs, of course, stayed with us out at the holes, which were half a mile from the cabin we were occupying on another claim up the creek. Cabins in that country have no locks and sometimes only a blanket is hung up for a door. This cabin had a piece of canvas which was not dog tight, much to our sorrow. We had hung our bacon, ham and other cooked grub up to the rafters. One day we came into dinner to find that some strange dogs had stolen and destroyed nearly all our grub. They had jumped up onto the table and made a flying leap to the meat, had torn it down and got hold of the sack that held our tins of butter. They cleaned out the can we had already opened and actually tore open the other tins with their teeth, and, of course licked those clean, too. So, there we were, 38 miles from the nearest store, with only one meal left. We could not buy grub from the other miners, more than a few meals, because they, too, had to pack theirs out. So we had to hotfoot it for another load.

Arriving in Dawson, we heard of a new strike made at Nome, but could not learn much about it just then. We thought that it was probably another false rumor, as so many rumors of new strikes had turned out to be. Of course, before going back into the hills again, we had to take in all the excitement and entertainment we could absorb, so took in all the gambling and dance hall joints.

Those old miners, also quite a number of younger ones, who perhaps had been poor up to this time and had suddenly become rich by getting a good pay streak in a claim, were now hunting excitement. They could afford to pay for it now that they had, as it were, large bank accounts. "There is a lot more where that came from," they would say. Everybody had a full poke of gold dust in his jeans. (The poke is a miner's term for his gold sack, made of skin, long and narrow.) When these men got a "full jag" of Klondike booze, they threw the gold dust.

Opening up a rich claim

In a mining country like the Klondike, one of the first natural laws that takes form is not to recognize or allow currency to come into a mining camp. They say that "Chee-chako money and biled shirts" soon ruin a good camp. Chee-chako is an Indian word for newcomers. Gold dust is used as the means of exchange for goods of every description. When you make a purchase at a store or saloon, the clerk or bartender will hold out a little tin scoop called a "blower." The buyer will spill out a little gold dust into the scoop from his poke. The clerk weighs out his portion on special gold scales. And during this operation he always manages to spill a little onto the piece of Brussels carpet that he purposely keeps there as a mat, then pours back what is left into the gold poke. About once a week the clerk washes out his Brussels carpet and gets enough dust to pay his week's board bill.



Amusements in Dawson City

Saloons and gambling houses keep sawdust on the floors. When a miner gets to celebrating and is careless with his gold poke, there is sure to be gold dust spilled into the sawdust, where it cannot be immediately recovered. The sawdust is taken out and washed every week. This clean up, after a specially hilarious night, often produces a young fortune. Sometimes old cronies from up the creeks meet and, between drinks for all hands and swapping yarns about their rich claims, fail to pull the tie strings of their pokes and let their gold dust dribble into the sawdust.

At the height of the Klondike boom there were quite a number of noted characters there, men who achieved fame from the fact that they had rich claims and were of a more or less boisterous nature. The common herd of miners and prospectors soon fixed a handle onto the first names of these men so as to make them distinctive and easy to remember.

There was Shorty Swede, six feet, seven inches tall, who ran the largest saloon and gambling joint in Dawson. Bunch Grass Bill, an old cowboy from Oklahoma, got his name from his habit of always mentioning "the nice bunch of grass he saw here and there." Then there was Nigger Jim, a big man from Georgia, so named because he talked like a southern Negro. There were Nevada Charley, Chilkoo Bill, Skookum Joe and dozens of other noted men of that time.

WE SEEK NEW DIGGINGS

THE WORD "noted" I use to set these men apart from the usual run of prospectors. They all had money and plenty of it, and more up on the creeks where that came from. They surely did spend it but did not always get its full value in return. That is why the gambling houses thrive in a rich mining camp—come easy, go easy. The gambling houses are open 24 hours a day, 18 of the 24 hours run usually with full tables and four shifts of operators.

We saw poker games with $25,000 jackpots, where the (special) yellow chips represents $100 each, or $2,000 a stack. On the faro tables the games ran up to $5,000 a bet on the turn of a single card. The game operated with as many eager players as could seat themselves around the tables.

When a man desires to get a stack of chips to begin playing, he deposits his poke with the operator of the table. The operator puts one chip of the same color into his table drawer with the poke. White chips were $1, red $5, blue $10, common yellow $25 each, or $500 for a stack of yellow chips. When he got through playing, the operator returned the poke, sometimes with more gold in it but more times empty. The unlucky player always received a bar chip to get himself a drink.

We purchased another full pack of grub for man and dog and mushed out into the hills again. This time we took a new trail, which had fewer hills to climb but did not have water to drink, as this trail held along the ridges. In one stretch of 15 miles there were no waterholes at the time we were on the trail. We got thirsty and then more thirsty. But ours was nothing compared with the dogs' thirst. We had to make their packs lighter so as to keep them ahead of us on the trail. We came to several old waterholes but they had dried up. We had to keep the dogs plodding on ahead of us. All at once the dogs smelled water ahead of us and picked up more speed, so gained on us. Arriving there first, they plunged right into the water, and had it roiled by the time Al and I got there. But it was water. All of us, dogs and men, drank of it together, mud and all, and enjoyed it.

We were now on top of the divide and following its course, always expecting to find water at the base of the next butte. By climbing down into the creeks, on either side for a couple of miles, we could have found water, but it was a hard trail down and back.

This trip was our second one over the divide to Sulphur Creek. The trail followed the high ridges between the Bonanza and Brea Creeks up past the dome and down into the head of Sulphur Creek, where our cabin was located.

Going back to work, we learned of another grub stealer in camp. One day we left a big pot of beans cooking on the stove, which was out in front of the cabin under a porch roof. Returning at meal time, the beans were piping hot, but the hunks of pork left on top of the beans were gone. We watched the pot for awhile then discovered what had stolen our meat. It was a whiskey-jack, a bird of the jay family about twice the size of our common bluejay. Their favorite pastime was stealing meat out of hot pots cooking outside the miners' cabins.

Another amusing incident occurred here while we were trying to conserve our grub. Before leaving the cabin one morning I set out a batch of sourdough to rise while we worked outside. When we came back for noon beans my partner gave me the laugh. I had put my pan of dough in the upper bunk and it had risen, filling the pan and half the bunk. It ran over the side down into the next bunk and out onto the floor. There was no dough wasted by throwing it out. It was gathered up as best as we could—chips, dust, blanket yarn and all was rolled into nice wholesome bread. It was 38 miles back to the store with packs on our backs if we wanted any more grub.

To get back to our mining. When my partner and I had finished our fourth hole and about six weeks of the hardest kind of labor without even a color for a prospect, we just quit. We gave up the Sulphur Creek lay, packed everything over another divide onto Dominion Creek and proceeded to give our lay there a tryout.

About this time we met some miners just fresh out from town, who reported the Nome strike as being true and as rich as the Klondike. That was enough—new gold fields, rich, in American territory! That decided us.

But while we were here, we would first prospect what we had. After digging around a little, we got a fair prospect on the upper side of the claim, which was a bench, but was very short of water. However, we got enough to keep the rocker going, and the shallow digging made it easy to get out a grubstake. We worked this lay for three weeks. After paying the Canadian Government its 15 per cent royalty and the claim owner his 40 per cent, we still had about 15 ounces of gold dust, about $240. If there had been plenty of water I think we would have stayed there. But the stampede had us both.

One afternoon while we were packing to leave for town, a government Deputy Gold Commissioner came up the creek. Learning that we were leaving he asked us to take some mail for him. He said he would like his mail to catch the next steamer out, which left Dawson the next morning at seven o'clock. Somebody said he could not make it. We got ready, our packs very light, wore our moccasins, started at six p.m. for Dawson, 45 miles away, with one divide to go over.

At seven o'clock the next morning we were standing on the steamboat dock in Dawson, having delivered the letters in time. We walked the 45 miles in 13 hours, stopping only twice for a light lunch. Our dogs could not keep the steady pace; they came into our tent at nine o'clock that morning, pretty well fagged out. We were somewhat fagged ourselves. In fact, it required a couple of days to get rested up. The hard work and heavy trails of the past summer had put us in shape for almost any test.

At home we found a note pinned to our tent saying that brother Ben had gone down to Nome and that the strike there was authentic, the reports good, and for us to pack up our few things and follow him. He got away about three weeks ahead of us.

Quite a number of men were ready to go down with us just as soon as a boat should arrive from below. It was two weeks before we left Dawson on a steamboat for St. Michaels, at the mouth of the Yukon River on the Bering Sea, a distance of 1,700 miles. Not long after leaving Dawson we crossed the International Boundary into Alaska and began to notice that quite a number of men were wearing six-shooters in their belts. Now that they were beyond the jurisdiction of the Canadian Mounted Police, they were free to wear guns, as there were no sheriffs or U. S. Marshals, or even a law against it.

The steamers go at a good speed downstream with the current. One of our amusements was to watch for an Indian camp along the bank, and see the waves from our steamer tip up all their canoes, and to see the antics they went through in trying to keep their boats right side up.

In going through the Yukon flats above Fort Yukon, our boat tried to make a sharp curve in the channel and ran into a cutbank at full speed. Everyone who was not prepared for it fell on his neck but nobody was hurt. The boat swung around in the current and broke off about half the paddles on her wheel by drifting into another bank. We tied up for two days to make repairs.

We next came to the Ramparts. The old Yukon River broke through those rocks a long, long time ago and left a channel with walls 500 feet straight up on both sides and about 5 miles long. This break in the mountains leading out of the Yukon flats is called the Ramparts. About 400 miles below the Ramparts, the Tanana River empties into the Yukon. Little did we think when we passed the mouth of the Tanana that the big gold fields of the Fairbanks district were to be located, ten years later, at the head of that river.

The next point of interest was the old Russian mission church and Indian village located at the mouth of the Koyukuk River, which is very large and drains a vast territory north of the Yukon. The old Russian church was still there, the same as it was when Alaska belonged to Russia.

Along in the hills here, right on the riverbank, we passed by a coal mine. Two prospectors discovered a coal lead and had tunneled into a hillside, piling their coal right down to the water's edge. They had 41 or 50 tons out and were trying to sell it to the steamboat captains. Our captain said he could not use it because his (and all other boats) had woodburning boilers.

About 100 miles upriver, before reaching the sea, there is a cutoff trail, a winter sled trail, across a strip of land for about 40 miles, which saves about a 200-mile trip around by St. Michaels. This portage leaves the river at an Indian village named Nulato.

We finally arrived at the delta of the Yukon. The old river has been depositing silt into the ocean for such a long time that the sea proper is about 50 miles from the original shore and those 50 miles are full of small channels with low lying islands covered with tall goose grass. This delta, among others of the same nature, is the hatching ground for millions of wild geese. We could see geese everywhere, from goslings that could not fly to full-grown geese. Our boat deck was high enough to look over into other channels and in those and on the islands one would see thousands feeding undisturbed.

It took three days to get through this delta on account of dense fog. It required special Indian pilots to get through the network of channels. We finally arrived at the Port of St. Michaels. which lies about 20 miles north of the Yukon River, on the mail shore of the Bering Sea.

It is only a small port, with a few company warehouses and machine shops. But when we arrived it was all excitement over the gold strike at Nome, across the Norton Sound, only 400 miles away. But this was the nearest town and the only supply base for the new gold fields.

HOW NOME GOLD WAS DISCOVERED

AT ST. MICHAELS we changed from a river boat to a deep sea ship to cross the sound and reached Nome's waterfront in the early morning, in a cold drizzling rain, something we did not get in the upper country.

Nome, the mushroom gold mining town of the north, lay in the hazy distance, strung out for miles along the beach. It was only half a block wide. with but a few low flat wooden buildings and thousands of tents. Our first sight of Nome from the sea presented a picture of a long flat ugly line, of a primitive civilization, hanging onto the edge of a vast bleak tundra, with not a tree or even a shrub within 200 miles, a town on the shores of a cold Arctic sea.

Nome has no harbor. The coastline runs straight east and west for 70 miles; there is no protection against storms for the deep water ships. They must lie off about three miles from the beach. The water is shallow out for a mile or so and should a southeast storm come up quickly, they would be caught in shallow water with a high sea running.

The trading companies had already been here with a large stock of goods from St. Michaels. They had some flat scows and a small flat bottom tug to pull in goods and passengers from steamer to shore. During storms they put into the mouth of Snake River, which empties into the sea near there. We got ashore on one of these lighters. With no waterproof clothing on we got soaking wet in the rain.

We met Brother Ben after hunting through about a thousand tents. Nearly everything was as yet in tents. Only a few saloons had half boards and were covered with canvas. The trading companies had boards and sheet-iron to cover their goods.

There was but one log cabin in the line of the Main Street, put up early, before a street had been formed. The tented city had lined up lots to build on, so that this lone log cabin was right in the center of the main highway of the town. The builder had obtained logs off the beach to build it, as there was not a stick of timber nearer than about 200 miles from Nome. I will tell more about this log cabin later on.

Nome got its name from Cape Nome, which is 12 miles east of the town. Cape Nome got its name by putting together two words of the Eskimo language. The early ivory and fur traders would ask the Eskimo, "What is the name of this point?" and the answer would be "No-me," meaning that he did not know. The traders just let it go at that and called it Nome.

Early miners first called this Anvil City, on account of an immense rock just the shape of a blacksmith's anvil, situated on top of a mountain overlooking this part of the country. It can be seen far out at sea; it stands up like the Statue of Liberty. The government geological engineers forced the change of name to Nome. However, they did not change the name of the Discovery Creek which was named after the big anvil on the mountain.

A short time after we arrived at Nome, Ben got word from Dawson that if he wanted to sell one of his claims in the Klondike for $11,000 his man would meet him out in Seattle in the fall and pay him there. So Ben left us to look out for ourselves and took a boat for the outside, to return in the spring.

The story of the discovery of the Nome mining fields begins at St. Michaels. During the summer of 1898 a ship loaded with freight for the Klondike camps came into St. Michaels. The crew, on shore leave, got into the gold excitement with others. Two Swedes named Linderberg and Lindbloom, while on shore, heard the stories of the miners just down from Dawson and also got the fever. They wandered to the edge of town where a bunch of Eskimos, who had just come down from the north were camping, to get a look at a real Arctic Eskimo.

They noticed that some of the squaws wore ornaments of nugget gold. The sailors tried every means to learn where they got the nuggets, but could find out nothing. Finally they had to buy all their nuggets to keep the secret from the bunch of miners back in town, and trust to luck to follow the Eskimos back into the north to the place from which they came. That is just what they did. When the Eskimos pulled out, the two sailors, with their boat full of grub and equipment for prospecting, followed for days and weeks on the shoreline around Norton Sound, a distance of over 400 miles, and stopped at the mouth of Snake River, where there was a permanent camp of Eskimos.

From this point their real prospecting began. They went up the river to the second creek on the right, then up that creek where occasional panning along the surface gave good indications, then on they went for four miles.

Sinking a hole to bedrock, which was only three feet, they struck gold pay dirt and plenty of it. They staked out claims for themselves and for their friends, for which they got a half interest, stayed there, and panned out enough dust to buy a winter's grubstake and equipment for spring work. Then they returned to St. Michaels and spread the news to all the world.

The news did not reach Dawson until the early summer of '99. The report came upriver by steamboat. All the other towns below Dawson sent prospectors hot-footing down to Nome before our turn came. Steamships from St. Michaels took over all those poor discouraged prospectors who floated down the Yukon on their way out home.

Boats arrived from the outside early with goods of all kinds for mining camps. As soon as the ice permitted them to land, hundreds of men were staking up the whole country. Before the middle of the summer every creek in that district was in full blast. There were a number of creeks that were good pay in this district of about 25 miles square.

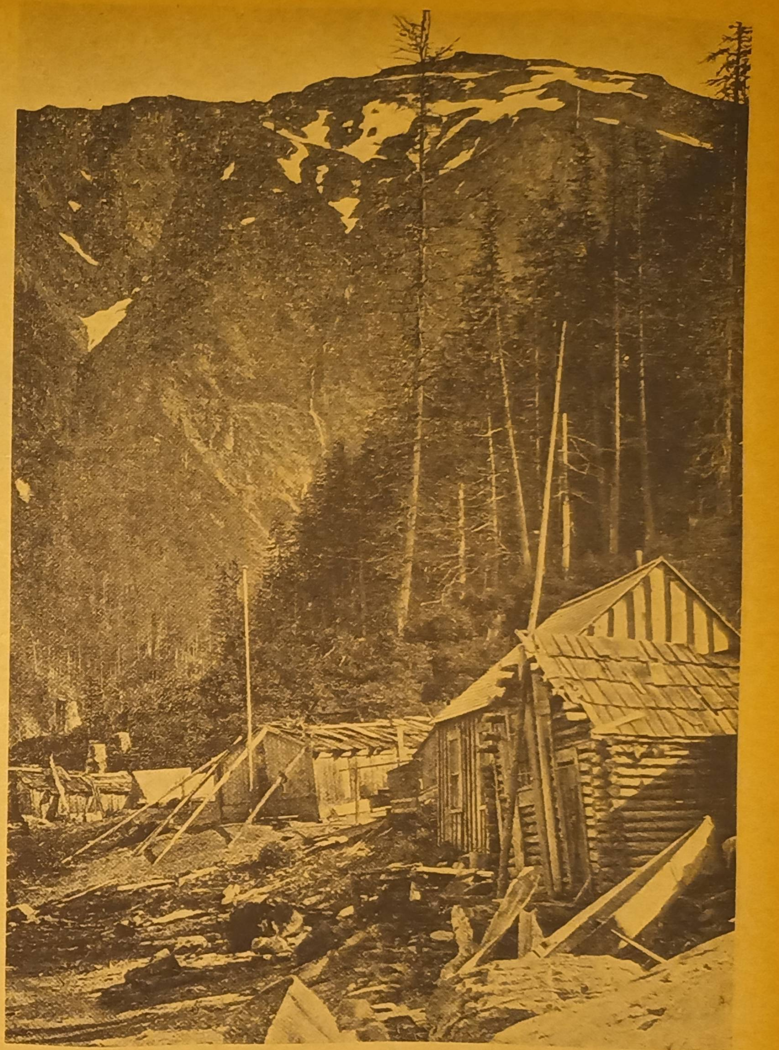
Of course, a number of the late arrivals did not get claims. One of these was a discharged soldier of the U. S. Army who came in with the later rush from the outside. He still wore his uniform. In his unhappy frame of mind at being without a means of proper nourishment, he strolled down onto the sandy beach and came to a little fresh water creek where he stopped to get a drink, and saw in the bottom some shining particles. He dug up some—and right there was discovered the "beach diggings" of Nome.

This discovery was a godsend to hundreds and hundreds of men out of luck in the creek claims. Every man who got a beach claim got at least a winter's grubstake out of it, and hundreds got from $500 to $8,000 worth of dust before it froze up in the fall. The beach diggings pay streak extended along the coast for about seven miles. It was from six inches to four feet wide and from one inch to four inches thick and down about three feet deep on a hard clay bottom.

In the dim past, whether by glacier or volcanic action, the gold was deposited in the sea and by constant water agitation from the storm and high surfs had been washed into a thick streak back a few feet from normal tide water.

No miner could pre-empt a full-sized claim on the beach, as Uncle Sam owns all land 50 feet back from high tide water. So the miners themselves formed a code of mining laws covering only the beach diggings. This law gave every man 16 feet up and down the beach. That provided for a 10x12 tent with two feet at each end to place the tent stakes, so if there was more than one man in the tent, he was allowed to extend his ridge pole ropes the full length of 16 feet per man.

The beach was filled with a line of tents as far as the eye could reach, and it was almost impossible for one to travel, as every man had a cross-cut ditch and several other holes dug around. The scene surely looked prosperous. Everybody was busy and happy and everyone making good pay. Some who happened onto the wide pay streak were making more perhaps than their neighbor, as the pay dirt would narrow up or widen out in the space of two or three claims.



Miners' cabins near Dawson City

When the cold weather set in, there were a great many men who had enough dust to take them outside to spend the winter back home. Had it not been for the beach diggings they would have had a disastrous time staying there through the long winter. Or if the U. S. revenue cutters had taken them outside, they would have landed in the States broke.

We landed in Nome right in the midst of the beach rush and excitement. After getting settled in Ben's camp we packed an outfit and hit off for a claim on the beach.

HARVEST OF THE STORM

EVERYTHING was pretty well staked before we got there but we managed to get one with a small creek running through the middle of it. The creek had washed the gold out of it into the ocean, but the surf had pounded it back again on each side. The streak was narrow, but we cleaned up about $500 in three weeks out of a strip of land 20 feet long. The reason it took us so long to wash that little strip out was that about the time we would get a little pay dirt uncovered and ready to put through the rocker a sudden southeast storm would come up and send in a surf that would wipe up every ditch and hole on the beach smooth and clean. After a storm it would look as though there had never been a shovel put into the sand. These southeast storms came up in a hurry, so fast that many a ship was blown ashore before she had time to pull anchor and get out to sea.

Speaking of storms and shipwrecks: about the time we had finished our strip of pay dirt and were thinking of going farther up to look for another, something happened. "Our ship came in" in the form of a sudden terrific southeaster which wrecked everything on the beach and almost everything on the water. While we stood on shore watching hundreds of men hanging to their tents and pulling their stuff out of the water, a big swell would tip over everything. We did not realize what was going on about three miles out as the pelting rain obscured the view.

This storm came up about 4 p.m. At this time of the year it got dark at about five o'clock. Our tent was up near the bank, more than 50 feet away from the high water, so that we did not have to move it back.

When we were fast asleep, a man opened our tent flap and asked us to lend him an axe and for us to get up and have a drink of whiskey. He wanted the axe to open the case with. He said there had been a big steamship wrecked out about five miles, and all the cargo was on shore or coming in with the storm. He was one of the sailors aboard the ship. As soon as they saw the ship was a goner and out of control everybody took to small boats and were blown in on the beach.

The ship was directly south of Nome when she broke in two; the wind was from the southeast, and, when her cargo tore loose, it blew to the northwest, just in our direction, five miles up west from Nome. When we got to the shore it looked as if a railroad train had unloaded; along the beach for two or three miles freight was scattered. It was three o'clock in the morning, with a pounding sea on, terrific surf, and raining and a gale blowing.

This sailor wanted to hide half a dozen cases of whiskey back of our tent so the other fellows wouldn't steal it, as he had no tent of his own. We said, "Hop to it, old top!" He buried ten cases in the sand behind our tent. The fact that this man woke us up at 3 a.m. gave us about three hours start on the rest of the miners. When daylight approached we saw smoke come from the line of stovepipes sticking through tent tops (those that were still standing). When they discovered the scenes on the beach in front of them there was a grand scramble for goods. Having picked out all we wanted to carry us through the winter, and piled it up at the tent, we sat down to watch the others hustle theirs.

The steamship underwriters, out in the United States, had no agents or representatives at Nome, and in order to collect for a total loss they could not lay claim to anything salvaged, so that it was "finders, keepers" up there.

To give you an idea of what we got out of it, I will name a few articles: nineteen sacks of flour, three boxes of sugar of 25 pounds each sealed in tin cans, 65 pounds of butter in 1-pound tins, 60 pounds of lard, 25 pounds of dried fruit, 50 pounds of corn meal, 50 pounds of rolled oats all in sealed tin cans, a case of soap, 100 yeast cakes, baking powder, beef extract, 1 barrel of green apples, 175 pounds of evaporated potatoes, 25 pounds of bacon, 500 feet of lumber, 4 lamps complete, 2 bedsprings, 4 feather pillows, 4 mattresses, 12 pairs of blankets, 6 folding chairs, 2 cases of selected magazines and books, 1 roll tar paper, 2 wash tubs, 35,000 cigars (some of these got wet, of course), 4 cases of brandy, 2 cases of wine, 1 case of gin, 4 cases of that sailor's whiskey. (How much would that be worth now?) We also got 1 case of wool socks (75 pairs), 20 pounds of breakfast food, 15 pounds of sausage, 1 bottle Jamaica ginger and 20 pounds of salt.

Indian women and papooses

And, lest we forget, a case of 6 one-gallon cans of syrup—that is, it looked like syrup; all the labels were washed off. When we sampled it on some flapjacks it turned out to be spar varnish! So we made a trade with our Swede neighbors and swapped them three cans of our "syrup" for a case of canned peaches, of which they had too many. Later they traded the varnish off to some other poor fellow after they too had eaten some on flapjacks.

After we got our stuff hauled down to our winter quarters, the neighbors bought nearly all our liquor at a greatly reduced price. But it was found money for us, as our cost was only our time picking it out of the water and guarding it to keep it from being stolen. Stealing whiskey is somehow regarded as no sin, and to turn it into gold dust was a hundred times safer—physically, morally and financially.

There were hundreds of other articles that we could have had but which were of no particular benefit to us. When the storm blew itself out about noon, we saw the beach littered with boats large and small. A big steamship, the steelplated *Cleveland*, broken into two halves about a quarter of a mile apart and lay on the bottom of the shallow sea, a mile from shore. The storm had rolled them into shallow water where they stuck up like two big hotels. The ship was completely gutted of everything that would float and broken in two right in her middle. Nearer in lay two sailing schooners, two large barges and five scows wrecked and broken, thousands of feet of lumber, timbers, boxes, baled hay (spoiled by the salt water), etc.

Such was our first month in the Nome country. The weather had been cold and rainy since our arrival; now the nights were frosty and winter was fast approaching.

After the big storm most of the beach diggers never went back to work. Those who had the price to get outside and back again in the spring went out to the States. This left Nome a pretty deserted place. Of the 8,000 men only 400 wintered there that year. Most of those who had paying claims also went out. There is no mining done in that country in the winter because the pay streaks are too shallow. It is strictly a summer camp.

The freezing weather made it impossible for us to work the beach any more. Now that we were supplied with grubstake for the winter, it was up to us to rustle our fuel. Coal was out of the question; it cost $100 a ton, common soft coal at that. Of course, we gathered a big pile of kindling, boards from the wrecks, but we had to have wood that would hold fire.

The miners along the beach had used up all available driftwood. We had to go up the coast for 15 miles, cut our logs into cordwood, then row back home in an old clumsy scow. Just as the frosty days and nights set in, the wind switched around to the north and we had no more southeast storms or heavy seas in from the ocean. That is why we could haul wood along the seashore with a scow.

We cut a cord of fine fresh spruce into cord wood lengths, which was a scow load, and went home, making the trip in two days. When we landed on the beach at Nome we were beseiged by buyers and sold the load to a restaurant man for $45.00. This bid was too big for us to refuse. We contracted with him for three more cords, delivered for $125.00. We went back and got busy the next day, and cut two cords ready to take home.

One cord was all that could be loaded on the scow with any degree of safety and rowed 15 miles. We took one in and returned for the other cord the next day, but did not find it. Someone had swiped it—rowed or rafted it to his cabin. We had to cut another cord so as to fill our contract. Having our own yet to bring in, we went out once more. This time we found the longest and largest red fir tree that was ever found on that coast. It was 160 feet long, was ten inches through at the top, and six feet through at the butt. Out of this log we cut seven cords of wood. The log did not have bark or a limb, was straight as an arrow, and was ground smooth on all sides, a regular mainmast for a ship. There is no telling in what part of the world it had grown to such proportions. That old log lasted most of the winter for fuel.

This country was a different proposition in winter from the upper timbered country. Down here the north wind blows at a hurricane speed most of the time; there are blizzards so terrible that one cannot see 20 feet; they last four or five days at a time.

We had to make our tents, which were double to be winter proof. All had to live in tents out there on the open tundra by the beach. There was a stretch of seven miles of level tundra back of us for protection.

The nearest foothills were seven miles north, with sloping round-top mountains back of them. The snow on the tundra never got more than a foot deep because there was nothing to hold it in the strong winds. The constant blowing and shifting of the snow reduced it to small grains of ice, like sand, so that in a hard wind it would cut a hole right through a drift such as formed behind our tents. A large drift will form behind a tent in one day; occupants of the tent will throw their wash water over the drift, forming a crust of ice shaped like a dome. In a day or two the wind will shift and cut out the snow under the ice dome, leaving a bridge of ice, while a new drift is forming in another place.

Many miners who went outside for the winter did not take their outfits with them, as they expected to return in the spring. There were hundreds of unoccupied tents with all their stuff scattered around just as the miners had left them when they hurriedly pulled out for the States. The storms had blown down quite a lot of tents. When the men returned in the spring not one man complained of having had anything stolen.

The class of miners that stayed there that first winter were of the old school—rough and hard-boiled, would fight at the drop of the hat, would shoot you if they had to; but steal?—never! They would hang a thief but would give their last cent to a man in distress.

OUR WINTER AT NOME

THAT FIRST winter in Nome the miners did not have to organize a vigilance committee. Every man recognized the fact that if someone should start a dirty deal he would be severely dealt with. There was no constitutional law represented there, either by constable, sheriff, or U. S. marshal.

But the next winter it was a different thing, after "law and order" moved in the following spring with the big rush of 1900. There were about 30 women, not counting the dance hall girls, who remained that winter, wives of the miners. During those long dark days and nights all forms of entertainment were made up, with their help. We had minstrel shows, debating teams, literary societies, dramatic clubs, comedies and dancing clubs. Each week brought some kind of entertainment that would draw a full house. The building used was a vacant storeroom belonging to one of the trading companies. There were other forms of entertainment that did not require so much preparation, such as playing poker, shooting craps, etc. There was always something doing to break the monotony.

During the day of four hours of light, one had to hustle to get camp chores done. Water had to be hauled from the creek, one and one-half miles back from the tundra. If you wanted a mess of fish you had to go out on the ocean ice and, with a chisel, cut a hole through four feet to the water, stand there in the wind and fish with a line which froze as fast as you pulled it up. The thermometer was 20, 30 or 40 degrees below zero, but you caught great fish in that country.

Time did not seem to pass slowly with Al and myself except on stormy days; we made it a point to hitch up the dogs and do something or go somewhere each day.

Water was a problem in the winter. Snake River was too salty and the tundra puddles were frozen. A hole that did not freeze up, in a small stream called Dry Creek one and one-half miles away, was the nearest fresh water which was safe to drink. Many of the miners drank snow water. They threw a handful of nails into the water bucket so as to get the mineral deposit from the rust that was thrown off the nails.

Three times a week it was my duty to take the dogs and haul water for ourselves and five of the neighbors. I had 8 five-gallon oil cans and would bring 40 gallons at a load. We got 25 cents a can from the neighbors.

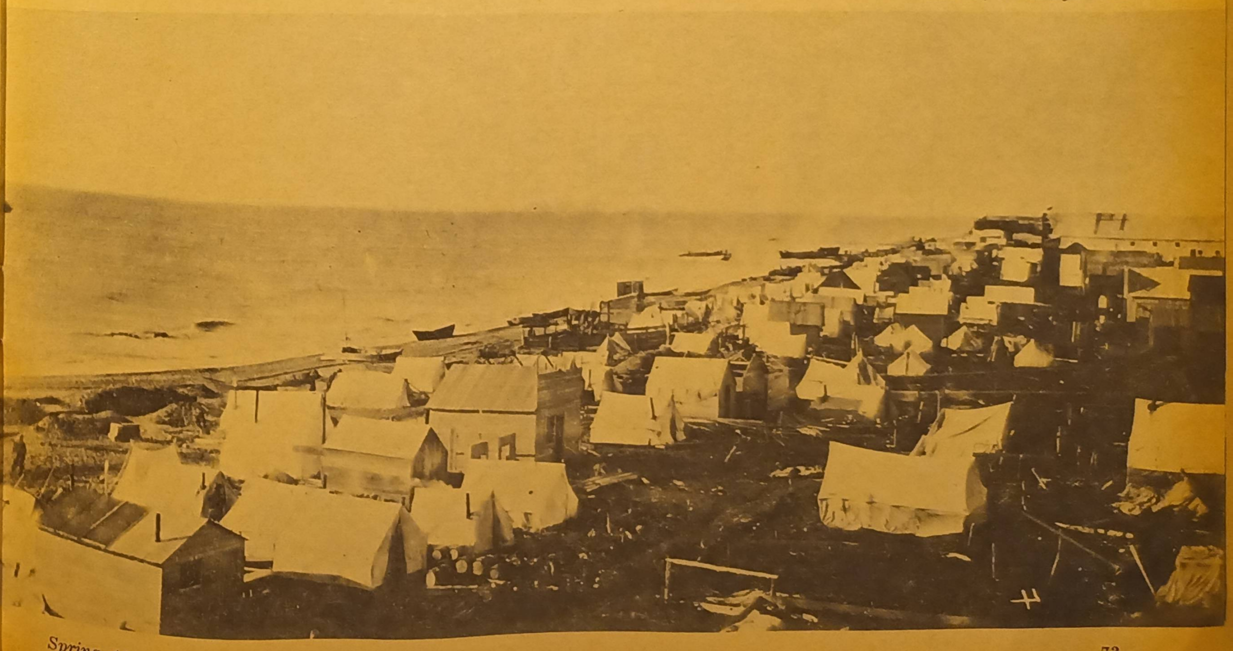
Everything in the mining line was at a standstill during the winter. Bedrock in all the creeks was so shallow that one could do no drifting underground, and if he could there was no wood with which to do any thawing.

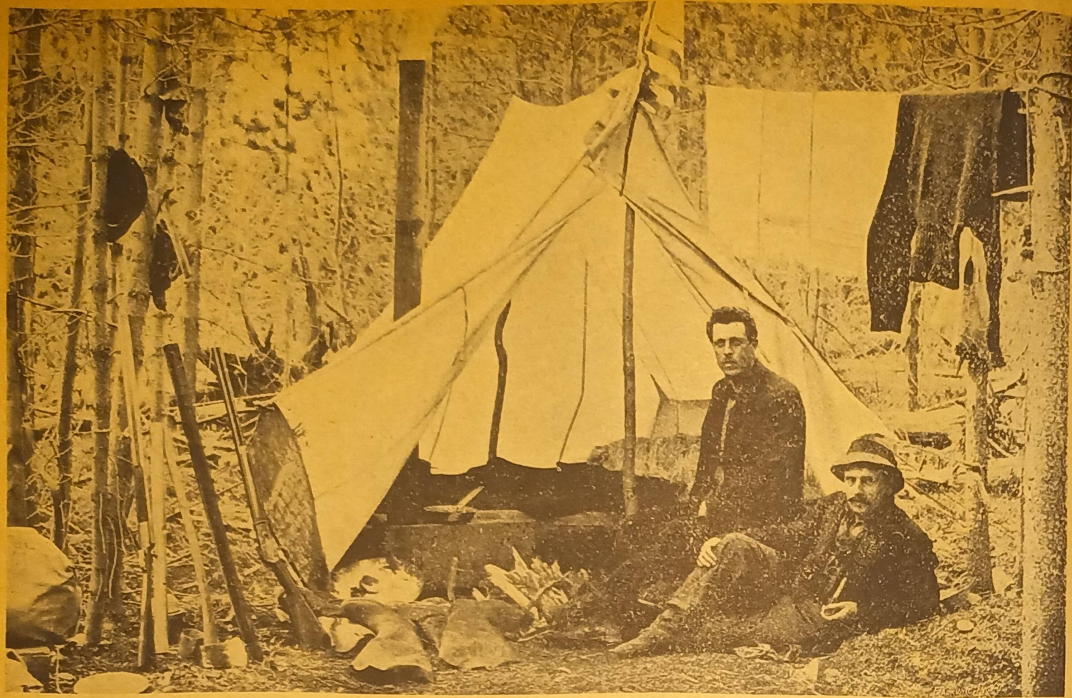
Some of the men took a mush back into the hills for new locations, but that was risky on account of the blizzards. If one gets back into strange territory where all the hills look alike and is overtaken by a five-day blizzard, chances are he will have a tough time. Several parties were lost in blizzards and frozen to death on just such trips; in some cases their remains were found the following summer by other mushers.

Mining laws of Alaska and the United States require the owner of mineral lands to do at least $100 worth of work on each separate claim each year as assessment work and he is required to put it on record in the recorder's office.

In December, many of the men have their eyes on different claims that they know have never been worked and will be open for relocation at one minute past twelve a.m., January 1. Whoever gets his stakes down and gets to the recorder's office first gets the claim, regardless of who staked it the year before.

Tent City (Nome, Alaska, 1898)


University of Washington Photo



Prospectors in camp.

On New Year's Eve, there were 50 or more men who left town, each carrying a lantern, a bundle of stakes and his location notice already made out, and each man knew what claim he was heading for. A likely looking claim usually had from one to six men waiting at the starting point, all ready for the stroke of midnight. Then they are off on the run around the four corners of that claim —putting in an already marked stake, just sticking it into the snow for the present—then a dash off to the office, to be first in with a duplication of his location notice. The original notice he left sticking in the top of his initial stake with a baking powder can turned over it. Whoever gets his record notice marked No. 1 is usually the rightful owner unless his opponents have a good deal of nerve and try to bluff him into giving up a share to avoid litigation in the courts. That first winter there was no such tom-foolery pulled. There were no lawsuits in sight at that time.

The federal mining law also provides that a claim owner shall not remove another man's stakes. No matter how many stakes there are on his claim he cannot touch them. But in the early years a claim owner could shoot a man if he caught him putting down stakes on his claim, provided he himself had lived up to the requirements.

The following year when the big rush came in from the outside, there were over a dozen men shot while trying to put down stakes on rich claims so as to tie them up in litigation in the courts and put them into a receiver's hands. Rather than do that, a rich claim owner would pay him off for a nice little sum of money.

My partner and I relocated a claim at that first midnight session that afterward turned out to be our grubstake—our bank, so to speak. The water on our creek was the handicap; we could not get enough to use sluice boxes, so we had to use the old rocker again. We could always go out to the claim if a grubstake was wanted and pound out an ounce a day (that is $16.00). If there were a good sluicehead of water, they would be fair paying claims, as much more dirt could be washed with the same amount of labor.

In January, shortly after we had staked a few relocations, we decided on a new thrill which would help to pass away this long winter. We assembled our trail outfit, with a six weeks' supply of grub and some trading goods, and started up the coast into the Eskimo country, which we knew was some 80 miles northwest along a barren treeless coastline. We had no protection from the howling blizzards except our tent and the stove. We started fully equipped with our three dogs and struck a good trail the first day.

As we got farther away from town the trail petered out; we had to break trail all day against a hard wind at about 20 degrees below zero. We had adopted Eskimo dress throughout, and were pretty well equipped to break head winds.

Our first night camp, under the lee of the bank along shore, with the wind and snow howling, was no joke. When we finally got our tent up and the stove going there was no more patience left. On a new trip the first night is always the worst. The next two nights we managed to crawl into an old deserted igloo, dogs and all, and were quite comfortable. But before morning we found we had company, common Eskimo lice—common to the Eskimos, terrible to us. In the daytime one does not mind them. They lie quiet and ride. But at night—how they do travel! A person cannot feel them bite; they crawl, keep moving around in one's underwear. We caught about a dozen big ones and to see how much cold they could stand put them in a small bottle and set them outside for 24 hours in a temperature of 40 degrees below zero. They clustered into a small ball and looked as if they were frozen stiff. After they were exposed to the warm air they were soon crawling around in the bottle as lively as ever. Their main diet had been fish and seal oil, obtained through the Eskimos. That is the reason they cannot be frozen—too much oil in them.

The next night we met a squawman—that's a white man married to an Eskimo woman—who was going back to Nome with some walrus ivory and sea-skin mukluks. He camped with us in an old igloo.

We learned many valuable clues to their customs and many words of their language, which he said contained only about 300 words. Some that I remember are:

Kow-kow-peluk—all gone
O-blog-in—tomorrow
Ar-ze-ga—pretty, beautiful
We-ve-luk—baby
No-me—no
Nit-sook—reindeer
Ugh—yes
Kiak—small skin boat
Oomiak—large whaleskin boat for family use
Hook-a-ma-glook—big chief, fine man, good friend

The exact location of the main village of that coast tribe was out on a sand spit, eight miles in the Bering Sea, at the mouth of Port Clarence Bay and only 25 miles south of Teller City.

Our next night's camp was at Shay's roadhouse. Shay, an Irishman, conceived the idea of making a small fortune by putting up a shelter for weary mushers on the windiest and most treacherous part of the whole northwest Alaska coast, a stretch of 20 miles or more that is storm-swept every day all winter. It was stormy each of the eight times I crossed it after that, during the three winters I was there.

Fifteen miles or so back from the coast there is a high sawtooth range of mountains running parallel with the coast, and opposite Shay's there is a large gap through which a river flows. The gap is three miles wide and acts like a flue. The wind north of the range draws toward the gap and makes it very windy continuously down to the coast. Mr. Shay showed his appreciation of that fact by putting up a roadhouse just opposite this windy stretch, knowing that there would ultimately be a heavily traveled trail up the coast to Teller. With his dogteam he picked up his building logs along the beach and hauled some as far as ten miles. We stayed at Shay's for two days to rest up.

From this point the Teller trail runs northwest toward the foothills, around the end of Sawtooth Range and then straight north into Teller. Our trail ran up the coast to the west about 40 miles, along an unknown coastline, with no trail broken. We crossed several stretches where we had to cut our way through pack ice which stood up on edge, side by side, for acres in extent.

OUR LIFE WITH THE ESKIMOS

WE ALSO were caught several times in blinding blizzards and had to put into the lee of a great block of ice, tie our tent to it, crawl under and wait until the storm let up so we could see where to go. It was an easy matter to head out to sea and get lost.

It took us four days to reach our destination from Shay's. If it had not been for our keen-scented dogs we would have passed along without knowing of the nearby Eskimo village located up on the tundra, about 150 feet back from the shore. It was snowing and blowing very hard. If we had passed on for half a mile out onto the ice of the Port Clarence harbor entrance, where there is an open water channel and an occasional open seal hole in the ice, we might have plunged into one for an afternoon bath.

All at once our dogs began to sniff toward the north, which told us that something was up on the bank. We climbed up and noticed traces in the drifting snow of a well beaten trail leading north. We followed it.

When we pulled up near to the mounds which we knew were igloos, our dogs and equipment made some noise which was heard by their dogs. Before we really had our bearings, out came a bunch of Eskimos as fast as they could climb up their stick ladder and get out of their main entrance top. Old men, young bucks, squaws and plenty of kids crowded around and stood looking. Ours was the first white man's outfit most of them had ever seen. Their village was quite a long way off the white man's trail.

By signs with our hands and our newly learned words, we managed to make them know we wanted shelter, wanted to camp with them. The chief gave a few grunts to his gang and they disappeared down the ladder. To us he extended an invitation to come with him to his house. His igloo was also down the same ladder. We had to unhitch our dogs and let them down one at a time on a rope, then haul our outfit down that one stick ladder into a room about ten feet square. We followed our old chief out of this room into a tunnel 3½ by 4 feet high and 40 feet long, at the end of which we pushed through a sealskin curtain right into the chief's living quarters—all underground.

In this village there were sixty Eskimos, distributed in three units of igloos, as described above. Some families of eight and ten occupied one igloo; some had only two and some were empty. In building these winter igloos they first dig a hole 15 to 20 feet square and 4 feet deep. They get drift logs off the beach, cut them about seven feet long, stand them up all around the walls, put a log roof over, then throw the dirt all back on the top so that it is three or four feet thick. They leave a hole in the center, two feet square, for the window, which is covered with a tanned sealskin and is up on top so that the snow will always be blown off. The main entrance is also used for storage of sleds, harness, etc. Each family has its own tunnel. Each time we went through a tunnel we got a quantity of frost down the back of our necks because we did not duck low enough.

The Eskimos, in their native localities and winter igloos, do not use any fire for heat or cooking. Their only fire is a grease light hung on the wall. It is a short piece of ivory tusk, gouged out enough to make a dish to hold a quart of seal oil. with a float of seaweed for a wick, which gives off a sickly yellow

Street scene, Nome, Alaska, in early 1900s after Gold Rush had stimulated development

University of Washington Photo

SALOON
THE SIDEBOARD
RECEPTION
THE LOUISE D WILL SAIL FOR TOP COCK

light and a continuous spiral of fish oil smoke.

When a white man undertakes to live with the Eskimos he surely has a job until he gets used to it. We nearly died from suffocation and burnt fish oil smells the first few days. That light burns night and day all winter on account of the long nights and dark stormy days.

One of the unusual things we noticed on entering the igloos was that all the people inside were in the nude or nearly so. All the children up to about 15 or 16 years were stark naked; those older had on ony sealskin pants. We noticed that each man or woman when he or she came in at once removed his or her parka, which is all those Eskimos wear even in the most severe weather. The parka has fur on both sides, as do the pants and seal mukluks. In their houses, their bodies give off enough heat to keep them sufficiently warm and their going without clothing in the igloos toughens them to stand the cold of the North country.

Of course, it was impossible for us to get along in the igloos without fire to cook our grub. We got permission from the big chief to set up our sheet-iron stove and cut a hole through the sealskin skylight. It also gave us a chance, without the Eskimos' knowing it, to get some ventilation into the room by keeping the damper open in the stove. Shortly after the fire was started and the room got comfortably warm for us, the Eskimos began to show signs of discomfort and moved back into their bunks farthest from the stove. Some would go through the tunnel to other igloos, while new ones came to give us the once over.

We had brought along some extra food for the Eskimos as a present or peace offering. We put on 2 five-gallon oil cans full of a mixture of oatmeal, cornmeal, cut up bacon and two pounds of sugar, and boiled this about an hour. It smelled good, it tasted good, and it was good. Also it was a cheap food that went a long way. When it came time to eat, we told the chief to invite all hands in, the whole camp to bring along dishes to eat from. When the chief told them, there was a mad scramble through the tunnel by those living in other igloos to get their own dishes.

By the time we had dished out the ten gallons to about 60 Eskimos, we had poured it into every style of container. They came with wooden dishes of every shape, tin plates from ships, tomato cans picked off the beach, walrus tusk spoons, walrus skin dishes and pan-shaped sacks that were water tight. We had enough to give each a good helping and they went away full and satisfied.

It did not take much to fill them up. Their mode of living was to eat little and often and when they got three big spoonfuls of our grub, their little stomachs stuck out. We had a few biscuits left over from our previous meal, so we warmed them up, put some butter and sugar on them, and gave them around to the squaws and the big chief.

That's where we made the big hit. After that feed there wasn't anything the whole tribe would not do for us. They simply adopted us. We used to go from one igloo to another and were warmly welcomed wherever we went.

The squaws did our mending with gut thread and seal patches; the larger boys chopped our wood; the hunters took us out seal hunting. We had to teach the squaws how to cook and make biscuits. They surely fell for the soda biscuits with butter and sugar. These new and different things to eat that the white man used were so vastly different from their everyday bill of fare that they nearly went goofy over it. Before we left their camp we had to give them a list in writing of materials used for the cooking. These lists were to be read by the traders. Of course, we could not feed them every day, so we had an opportunity to see and to learn firsthand how the Eskimo lived in his native way in the Far North before the advent of the white man.

Bruce D. Giffen Photo

"Home" in Dyea

First of all, I must describe their living quarters as they are in each igloo where there is more than one family. On three sides of the room they build a large shelf extending full length across the wall, six or seven feet wide. Each family occupies one of these shelves as sleeping quarters, sleeping side by side no matter how many members there are, and all with their heads toward the center of the room. Each family keeps all its possessions on its own shelf. At one end of the shelf they keep their wooden dishes, which are of every shape imaginable. At all hours of the night some of them were crawling out of the shelf to eat from the pile of frozen fish and seal oil.

When a man brings in a seal he flops it down on the floor; the squaws then take care of it. They first skin it and remove the oil blubber. While this is going on the kids are having their fun. They reach in and grab a handful of the fresh blubber and suck out the oil as our white kids would suck an orange.

When the squaw got all the skin and blubber out of the way, the kids would again attack the meat on the carcass of a seal after the layer of blubber is taken off. We tried some of the meat and liked it very much for a change.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY AMONG ESKIMOS

ONE THING that annoyed us was that just at our mealtime these dirty children with their greasy shiny bodies would crowd around our homemade table, which was about a foot high. While we were eating they would sit on the edge of the table and do other things less than polite. For one who has a delicate stomach, this would be a poor place to board.

As soon as Eskimo girls get old enough to wear their sealskin pants while in their igloos, which is about 14 or 15, they have arrived at the marriageable age. A young buck will pick out the girl of his choice by courting her in the presence of her father, and if he likes her he will ask her father how much he wants for her.

The father says, "How much you give?"

The boy says, "Maybe I give one dog, or two seals, maybe one deerskin parka."

The father accepts what he thinks is a fair price for his daughter. The boy takes the girl over to his shelf at his father's igloo and starts housekeeping right away. No marriage license is required or wedding certificate issued, nor is there a preacher to pay. The girl has no choice in picking out a husband. She can't take him or leave him as white girls do: she must take him.

The Eskimos' main food is fish, with seal oil to lubricate its pathway. In winter they go out onto the ice and spear a hole about eight inches to a foot wide through to water. Late in winter the ice is eight or ten feet thick. They build shelters out of blocks of snow, hard enough to pile up like a brick wall.

For tomcod fishing they use a small gut line fastened to a pole about two feet long. With another stick the same length they pull up their line on the two sticks so as not to get their hands wet, in weather 40 degrees below zero. On the other end of the line they use a piece of whalebone with sharp upturn hooks but no barbs. About six inches above the hooks they use a piece of red rag for bait. The tomcod are nearly a foot long. They will gather around the red object and when the fisherman gives a sudden jerk upward, he will often catch two or three fish through the under-jaw.

The fish are thrown out onto a sealskin bag and are frozen into a solid mass about the size of a washtub. The sealskin bag is removed and the mass of fish is set against the wall. Their grub pile is ready to eat. There is no real mealtime for them. Whenever one is hungry, whether it be in the middle of the night or day, he or she eats from this block of frozen fish. As fast as the fish thaw out, they claw off what parts are loose and eat it raw; then every other mouthful they dip two fingers into a cup of seal oil and lick them clean.

We have seen the Eskimos live entirely on this fish diet for weeks. During our six weeks' stay with them there was not a case of sickness. In fact, they were bubbling over with good health, energy and perfect happiness, without a care in the world. They had food, such as it was, in abundance, no rent, taxes or insurance, and their wants were few and easily satisfied. The mode of living was the crudest of any people on earth until the entry of the white man. Then new foods and trade goods and whiskey were introduced.

During our stay there we often went out to hunt seals with the hunters. Some of the older men still used primitive methods and weapons. The younger men had more modern equipment such as muzzle-loading rifles and iron hooks.

We went out once with an old man to see the really primitive method of catching seals. He first located a seal hole in the ice, built a windbreak and hiding place, then placed over the hole a rope ring made of whaleskin, two inches thick and dried hard. This skin ring had a lot of hooks made of ivory, fastened so as to hang over the edge of the hole, so that when the seals scampered back after coming up on the ice for air and play, they would get caught on a hook. Then the hunter would run out and kill his catch. Our old man used a club to dispatch his victim.

The gun hunters used no hooks but shot the seals as they came out of their holes, which was far more humane than the hook method. A man must have a heart of stone to kill a poor seal hanging on a hook. Their terrible screams of pain and agony were too much for us. But the old Eskimo went about his work without a thought of the pitiful cries. To us it was just like killing a baby.

When one or two seals are caught, a string is put through the jaw and they are hauled home on their own fur. They pull through the snow easier than a sled. When a hunter gets his seal to the igloo his job is finished; the squaw then takes charge.

The oil cells of the seal are just under the skin. A layer of two or three inches covers its entire body and is so soft that a handful can be squeezed out as one would squeeze out a sponge. The skin is tanned and later made into all kinds of garments; the oil is used for eating and for grease lights.

The common belief that the Eskimos in the North live in ice houses is true only when the hunters go out to the seal holes. They build round-top snow houses out of square blocks of snow and leave a small hole at the bottom to crawl into. They throw water over it and the whole house is frozen into one solid block of ice. These houses are used to protect the hunters from the terrible blizzards that often spring up so suddenly and would probably freeze them to death if they were not prepared. On the Alaska coast the Eskimos use underground igloos for winter quarters.

The weather at the time of our visit was too severe to do any walrus hunting. The natives do that in the fall and spring during the ice flows through the Siberian Straits just off Cape Prince of Wales.

We finally became fed up and made plans to return to Nome. Before leaving we drew a map showing the exact location of our cabin in Nome and gave it to the chief so that he could find us when his family came down the coast in the spring. During our stay there we gave several cooking lessons to the squaws and prepared a list to be presented to the storekeeper. When we pulled out from the igloo settlement, every native was present to see us off, with all kinds of grunts meaning goodbye or good luck.

We returned home without unusual hardships but with the same kind of weather that we encountered on the way up. Before we set up housekeeping again at home everything that we had used on the trip had to be deloused before going into the cabin. Our dogs had to be washed in a warm water solution.

One day before it began to thaw, when the daylight had increased to nearly twelve hours, we were surprised to see a tall weatherbeaten man with a face tanned to the color of saddle leather approach our cabin. When he spoke we knew him to be from the Klondike country. an old friend of Al's.

This man, Bill Perkins, was now at the end of a 2,100 mile trail. He and two

Street scene in Dyea, important terminal town near Chilkoot Pass

Bruce D. Giffen Photo

HEALY & WILSON.
HOTEL-RESTAURANT
MEALS 50¢ BEDS 50¢

others had covered this winter trail in 105 days of hard mushing down the Yukon through storms and dark days. They had to walk every step of the way, having only two dogs to pull their camp outfit. Throughout the trip they averaged 20 miles a day and such an appetite that man had when he arrived and found a change of food! It took a week for him to recover a normal appetite. The hard mushing on snowshoes day after day against that white glare of snow was enough to make a man hungry. He stayed with us the rest of the winter.

The spring of 1900 finally came, and with it new thrills. One almost enjoyed getting wet again because one knew it meant warmer weather. The winds changed often from north to south, bringing in the warm chinook. As spring advanced the snow thawed enough to permit cleaning door yards and getting rid of tin cans that had accumulated. Cans and rubbish were hauled out onto the sea ice. When this ice moved it carried everything away into the Arctic Ocean.

It is a sight in the spring to see the ice start to move. That spring the miners made up a pool. It cost each one two-bits (25 cents) for a ticket on the exact second the ice would move. Everybody in town took a chance on winning a pot of over a thousand bucks. Most of us bought several tickets to increase our chances of winning.

A woman and two men were the lucky ones, having guessed the same time and everybody gathered to see that vast field of ice leave shore slowly, and move gently up the coast, swing out far enough to miss Sledge Island and pass up into the Arctic Ocean. Mushers on the trail, 400 miles above Nome, have reported seeing piles of tin cans riding on ice floes in the channel going into the Arctic.

SPRINGTIME AT NOME

WE OFTEN wondered how many sticks of timber and driftwood were deposited away upon a high bank and sometimes as far back as 200 feet on the tundra. Soon after our shore ice left us, we had an opportunity to see how it was done. The Norton Sound ice let loose and came past Nome in one solid mass 20 miles long and 6 or 8 feet thick, with a long arm that projected about a mile near the front end. Some 20 miles above Nome the current somehow swung that huge floe nearer shore than usual and shoved the arm of ice out onto the tundra several hundred feet. Everything that lay loose above the frost line was shoved back with it. There was no power on earth that could have stopped that ice. The main body went on to Sledge Island 30 miles above Nome and 9 miles offshore. When it hit that pile of rock, it broke in two but kept on going.

Every spring we had the sight of the icebergs going back into the Arctic. Every fall we saw them going down into the Bering Sea to winter. For a while both in fall and spring one could gaze into the southwest over the water and see a city's skyline with jagged peaks, square-topped towers, summits of every conceivable shape representing every type of building. These giant icebergs were slowly moving along in a very deep channel, evidently the main current leading into the Arctic. It is a sight that is not soon forgotten.

During the passage of these big bergs through the Straits the Eskimos make their catches of polar bear. They will drag their kayaks out over the smooth floe ice, paddle in around the big icebergs and spot a bear riding back into the Arctic. They shoot it and trust to luck that it will fall into the water. If it falls in, the Eskimo fastens a line to it and tows it to shore.

University of Washington Photo

Eskimo girl in furs

It is a risky undertaking to go out among those mountains of ice, which are shoving and grinding and occasionally tipping over. To the Eskimos it is one of the many hazardous tasks they perform year after year and think nothing of it.

In the spring of 1900, the ice let go and moved out on May 8. Vast fields of floe ice away out at sea prevented ships from coming through. It usually took about two weeks after the ice left our shore before any boats came into view on the southern horizon.

Everyone in camp was anxiously waiting and watching for the first boat, which usually was a whaler on its way to the Arctic whaling grounds. They always brought a small cargo of fresh vegetables, fruit and mail. The whalers charged a "whopping" big price for their stuff and got it, as the miners would buy anything fresh from the outside.

It was rather an honor to be the man or woman who saw the first ship in the spring and gave the alarm. It happened to be my fortune to first sight a ship this spring. It was just at noon. The sun was not very high in the heavens and straight south. I was standing in my tent door, shading my eyes from the sun and looking intensely into the south, when I saw a small puff of black which soon faded. Another puff about five minutes later indicated a steamer putting fresh coal onto her fire.

I stuck my head out of the door and yelled "Steamboat!" just as loud as I could. Then the fun and excitement began. Everybody in town soon got down to the beach, just to sit down and wait.

It would take a ship four to six hours, from the time it was first sighted, to land a skiff onshore. Often quite a lot of boats would pull out to meet the ship where she dropped anchor, in order to get the first news of doings on the outside. The first boat that came in through the large ice fields, which lay out 15 to 20 miles, had a perfectly smooth sea to anchor in, for the barrier of ice held down any swells. The time of the year between winter and summer was usually calm and quiet with only occasional hard blows.

About two weeks after the whaler arrived, the ice field was broken up enough to let other ships through. Then the big 1900 gold rush was on. Ship after ship—steamers, schooners, square-rigged sailing vessels, ocean tugs towing large barges and every kind of water craft, came and unloaded passengers and freight until there were 30,000 newcomers, or as they are often called up there "che-kakos." Everyone was excited, running here and there, trying to go somewhere to dig gold. The shore was again filled with diggers as far up and down as one could see, and tents were erected every few feet along the beach.

The shore was piled high with goods of every description—sacked coal, baled hay, lumber, household goods, provisions and machinery. When the rainy season opened suddenly with a furious southeast storm as an opener, you should have seen that beach. Every tent and every pound of goods was soaked with salt water and sand, and scattered all over the coast.

The action of the surf will soon bury a heavy article in the sand, so that all the machinery and coal was soon tipped over and rolled down into eddy holes dug out by the water.

After the che-chakos got straightened out, they were soon back on the beach and as busy as before, until another storm cleaned them off again. So it went all summer, storms sweeping the beach about every two weeks. Many smaller craft were broken up by that first storm. Later it did not happen often, as the sea captains got wise and lay out in deeper water.

At the first sign of a southeaster they would put out to sea and let the scows drift in to shore. Sometimes they got in without upsetting and sometimes not.

It is a fact that in the Nome country, gold—that is, color—can be panned in any locality that one wishes to try. It is usually flour gold, flaky and very light; yet it shows up in the bottom of a gold pan as a fair prospect.

Our tent was situated about 100 feet back from the beach. Halfway between, there was an old rotten log that Al and I used as bait to excite newcomers with. We would be sitting around in our sealskin pants that were bagged at the knees as big as hams, with walrus hide mukluks on our feet and whiskers enough to keep off the mosquitoes—in fact, real "sourdoughs." Those newcomers thought we were old-timers and asked us all kinds of questions about where to get a gold mine. We told them you didn't need to mine up here—all you have to do is to dig anywhere—the country was full of gold. We always told them to dig under that log and pan it out and see for themselves. That never failed to start them stampeding to some place to get busy.

In this big rush, of course, "law and order" came along in the form of a district judge, with all his hangers-on, a deputy U. S. marshal and commissioner, a small company of soldiers and a couple of thousand of the toughest crooks and ex-convicts that the underworld of the United States could furnish. Nome got more of the latter class of humans than did Dawson because no hardships were encountered in getting into the country.

One of the first jobs of the new commissioner and his marshal was to arrest 500 miners in one haul. On the east edge of town there was a sand flat of about ten acres that was subject to salt water floods during storms. It came under the order of beach mining government lands and was common beach diggings. During the lull in activities before the big rush, the Alaska Trading Company staked it out as a legitimate claim, intending to use hydraulic pumps on a big scale. But when the old beach miners of the fall before came in with the rush, they naturally went out onto this flat to start their rockers. The Company tried to persuade them to get off. The miners insisted on their squatter's rights and stayed.

The Company then used its influence with the new commissioner and had him issue a blanket warrant for their arrest and sent it down with their deputy U. S. marshal, old "Three Finger" Hickson. Three Finger ordered every man off the property. Not one man moved. He had to read his warrant and place us—for I was one of them—all under arrest. There were over 500 of us. He marched us all uptown to the commissioners' office.

Three Finger said, "Commissioner, here are your men."

When the old man looked out over that big crowd of tough-faced, gun-totin' miners he said, "Case dismissed."

The miners just wanted to know how far this new "law and order" program was going, and called the bluff. There was no more trouble in that end of town.

Three Finger Hickson was appointed to his office because he was a fearless man. It had been reported that he had helped to exterminate old Soapy Smith's gang in Skagway in 1897 and '98.

Old Three Finger was no coward. Once I saw him walk right up to a man who had him covered with a six-gun, and keep his empty hands out in front of him until he was close enough to poke his finger into the man's eye and knock his gun to the ground.

Yet there are times when the bravest of men see fit to back down and retreat. Old Three Finger did it, and showed his wisdom in doing so in that instance, while trying to run another bluff on one of the real old sourdoughs.

WHEN NOME WAS A NEW TOWN

LUCKY SWEDE, of Eldorado Creek in the Klondike, was the owner and builder of the lone log cabin that stood in the middle of the main street of Nome. Now that the town had grown to such large proportions, the city fathers rather looked with disfavor on Lucky's homestead in the center of the city's main thoroughfare. Instead of asking him to move his cabin off the street, they got Three Finger to go and order it off. He did and gave Lucky twenty-four hours to move or be moved. When the time expired, the deputy appeared with a four-horse team and a bunch of men. Three Finger approached the cabin, pushed open the door and stared, speechless, into the muzzles of two big six-shooters. Lucky backed him out onto the street and followed him around so that he covered all the men at once. Then he told old Three Finger a thing or two about things around here. He gave the "lawmen" one minute to get out of range, because "then I start shooting." They were all out of range with time to spare.

Two hours afterward, Lucky came up the road with teams and skids and moved his cabin off to another place he had prepared. But he would not be bluffed off anyplace by anybody. He knew that he was within his squatter's rights.

Everyone liked Lucky. A good spender, he would help out anyone who was on the square with a grubstake. He was one of the first to arrive at Nome from Dawson the year before, when the word first came up the river, and he got there in time to get two or three fairly good paying claims before the '99 outside rush arrived.

Rex Beach plainly describes in his story, *The Spoilers*, the workings of Nome's official family during that first year of "law and order," of how the public receiver was appointed by the "court," and how the claims were jumped by hoodlums that came in with the stampede and tied the claims up in litigation, so that the receiver collected all the gold that was being mined under court order.

A hoodlum would be offered $50 or $100 to go out and put his stakes on some other man's rich claim, then have his location notice recorded. That was all the claim-jumper had to do. The claim then was put in litigation under the order of the court and the receiver. The claims were forced to keep working and the receiver collected all the gold at the clean-ups pending the long-delayed lawsuits establishing "rightful ownership."

Meanwhile, gold from several rich paying claims was accumulating in the possession of the receiver. Long before the time arrived for the scheduled lawsuit there were a number of tightly bound wooden boxes delivered on the docks for shipment to the U. S. Mints out in the states. But through the concerted action of the original claim owners, that gold was not shipped out. In-

Interior of home of Alaska Indians

stead, a deputy U. S. Marshal from California arrived and served a warrant on the receiver to appear in San Francisco and show cause why he should not be prosecuted as an embezzler.

Through the court at Nome the receiver ignored the California summons. A month later one of Uncle Sam's bluejacket marines accompanied a U. S. marshal with a summons from the Court of Appeals of California, and again called on the receiver. This time he accompanied the marshal back to the States, and subsequently received a sentence of one year in the penitentiary for embezzlement. So ended the "law and order" rough stuff in Nome.

Three of the old Big 7 crew came down from the Klondike country with the rush. They were Fatty, Frenchy and the Magician. About two weeks after they arrived, Fatty got typhoid fever from drinking the tundra water and was sent to the Government hospital, where there were about 200 other patients with "tundra fever." Fatty pulled through a rough siege of six weeks, then took a revenue cutter out for home in Montreal.

Frenchy got a job with one of the Nome gold discoverers, Lindblooms, pitching gravel into a sluice box ten hours a day at $1.00 an hour.

The Magician had only $15 when he landed and straightway bought a tent and a few dollars' worth of staple canned goods. He located himself on a much used trail on the edge of town. As fast as he sold his goods he replenished his stock and added a little more until he grew too big for his 10 by 12-foot tent. In three months his stock had increased from that $15 to $5,000 and a house tent, 20 x 50 feet, full of a general line of merchandise for the miner.

After the community had suffered with typhoid fever, to a large extent from using the tundra water, the town got busy and put in a main of fresh creek water.

A word about this sea-level tundra. It is a frozen muskeg, full of mossy niggerheads, that roll under one's feet like a large sponge. The holes in between are filled with ice water that lies on the frozen ground at the roots of the moss. This ice water, always at hand, to the weary musher on trail, is sure typhoid if he stops to quench his thirst.

The town bought a second-hand flume out in the States somewhere, a 16-inch wooden pipe with iron hoops one foot apart. This pipe was seven miles long, laid from a creek at the base of the mountain, and on top of the ground all the way. It looked like a huge snake weaving up and down, over small rises of that big flat. Here and there along its length were tiny holes or leaks where water squirted into the air from the high pressure within, appearing like a huge reptile with whiskers. Of course, in cold weather the pipe had to be drained and the town had to use hauled-in water. There is no such a thing as digging a well, as there is no water below the ground that is not frozen.

Up at the head of Anvil Creek, right on top of the divide, claim stakes were put in by the early stampeders but there had been no prospecting done up there until midsummer. A Laplander, who had come to Alaska six years before with a bunch of reindeer sent by the United States Government, had taken time off from herding the reindoor to go up on top of the divide to stake a claim, that first summer. He finally found time to prospect it and after digging a hole down 12 feet, struck good pay dirt—in fact, so good that Lane Mining Company paid him $90,000 for it. He turned his herding job over to the Eskimos and departed for Lapland.

In the spring when the big rush came in, nearly every kind of business was represented in the making, there being several mercantile firms from the outside striving to get a foothold here. I recall the name of one firm, as I had dealings with them that were somewhat interesting from my point of view. This was the Lee Mercantile Company of San Francisco. They unloaded a shipload of general merchandise and had no store in which to put it, so they piled it up on the shore and hunted for a site on which to build. They had to get located on the main street or go back home, because back on the tundra there were only a few tents and small shacks built up on the water-soaked ground.

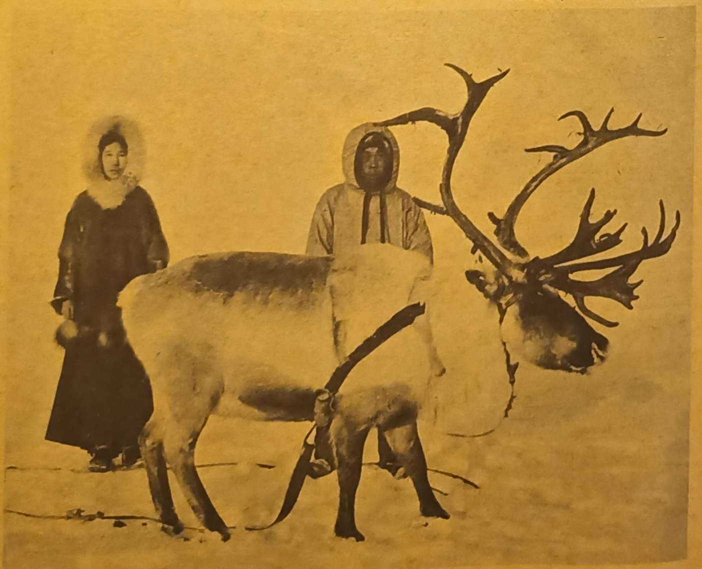
They spotted a fine large lot which the Lane Mining Company laid claim to, and asked to buy it. Lane Company would not sell, so the Lee Company jumped it, by right of possession, and started dumping their goods on the lot.

The Lane Company put me and a small tent on the middle of the lot, and told me to stay there, to hold possession continuously for a 12-hour shift with another fellow. Our salary was $1.00 an hour, 12 hours a day, for each. Our tent was so located that the Lee Company could not build their store without getting over on our tent land. For six weeks we drew down $84 a week, just to occupy a stool in front of the tent and watch the che-chakos go by. Finally the two companies settled their trouble out of court. The Lee Company occupied the lot; I lost a good job.

My friend Ben came in again with the big rush, after having visited homefolks back in the States, and what a lot of things he had to tell of the outside. He brought in quite a number of newcomers who wished to try their luck at mining. Three Boston doctors got interested enough to come to Nome with him. There were friends from Seattle and the Middle West who came along also.

Reindeer transportation in Alaska, 1900

University of Washington Photo



I dare say these newcomers were well entertained by the excitement and wildness of the shooting scrapes. About this time someone, and sometimes more than one, was shot every day for trying to pull off a crooked deal or jumping claims.

The doctors were so occupied they did not want to leave to go prospecting, but they made up a party of ten—nine newcomers and one sourdough, my partner Al. They got four pack horses and started off for the unknown country, some 75 miles back from Nome.

When they left town they were all shaved clean, had good equipment, fishing tackle, guns, etc., and they looked really pretty. They were gone about seven weeks. When they returned they were dirty, lousy, greasy, long-haired and bearded.

Al said he never had so much fun in his life as when watching those sedate doctors trying to make camp, for each man had to do his share of the work under Al's instruction.

STORMS OF THE NOME COAST

ONE INCIDENT he related happened at a river they had to cross by fording, where it was about a foot deep. One of the doctors—the most sedate and self-important of the party—was afraid to get his feet wet and asked Al to carry him across. Al agreed, and got the doctor firmly on his back, then started wading in. When he got to midstream, Al stepped on a slippery rock (on purpose) and fell. He was hanging onto the doctor so tight that in the fall he turned his body sideways which put the doctor on the under side in the water with Al on top of him. The water was ice cold and the doctor never asked to be carried across any more streams.

They did a lot of prospecting and found plenty of colors but no pay dirt. Very soon after they returned to town and rested up, most of them took a boat out for home.

During the time the party was out, we on the coast were having our usual run of storms from the southeast. One extra hard storm played havoc again with the shipping and the goods that had been piled up close to the water. It seemed that after every storm the people would still pile their goods on the sand beach instead of the wet tundra and each time had to salvage what they could out of salt water and sand.

One day I stood on shore and watched the break-up of the largest barge that was ever built, one which had been towed up from San Francisco by two ocean tugs. Lucky Baldwin, noted in 'Frisco as the luckiest gambler and race horse owner in the West, was the man who financed this *Skookum* barge and its cargo. It carried the biggest cargo of goods that ever was freighted in one shipment to Nome—1,000,000 feet of lumber, 300 horses, 500 tons of baled hay, and merchandise until the decks were awash.

The horses were unloaded the very first thing. Before the other stuff could be brought ashore, a sudden southeaster blew up and put a stop to all operations.

Nearly every craft out there was broken up. At this time of the year, large steamers and big ships knew that it was best to cut their lighters and small tows, and pull out to sea.

This big *Skookum* barge came drifting in slowly, as it was so big that it could not upset. When it was about a quarter of a mile from shore the big swells and surf started washing things off its deck. Soon the sea was filled with lumber and baled hay.

When the lumber got ashore it was smashed to kindling wood. High rollers would come under the rear end of those long boards and would tip them so that the other end would catch in the sand on the bottom and turn them up in the air, end over end. Thousands upon thousands of timbers would come in accompanied with a terrific roar of smashing wood and pounding surf.

The old barge was in the wake of the lumber and she soon began pounding on the bottom at every swell. It was not long before we saw her break into several pieces. She was piled up on top of the lumber on shore, everything soaked with salt water and sand.

The broken lumber and timbers from the barge gave us most of our winter fuel. Sailors who were on the barge took to their boats as soon as they sighted danger and came ashore.

There was one ship, the *Alaska*—a four-mast, square-rigged, old-time sailing vessel—that lay out about a mile farther than the *Skookum*, which was now receiving the attention of all onshore. The sailors had hoisted storm sails and tried to reach open seas. But the shallow draft with the excessive swells would not permit steerage way. All hands abandoned ship, took to the boats, and pulled away up the coast, away from the lumber. They landed soaking wet. We watched the big four-master float to within a mile of shore. Then she began to toss. She had struck bottom. Soon a large opening developed amidship, then the fore-half rolled over one side and the stern over on the other. Soon they were separated and rolled over and over until they were pieces of timbers piled up on shore.

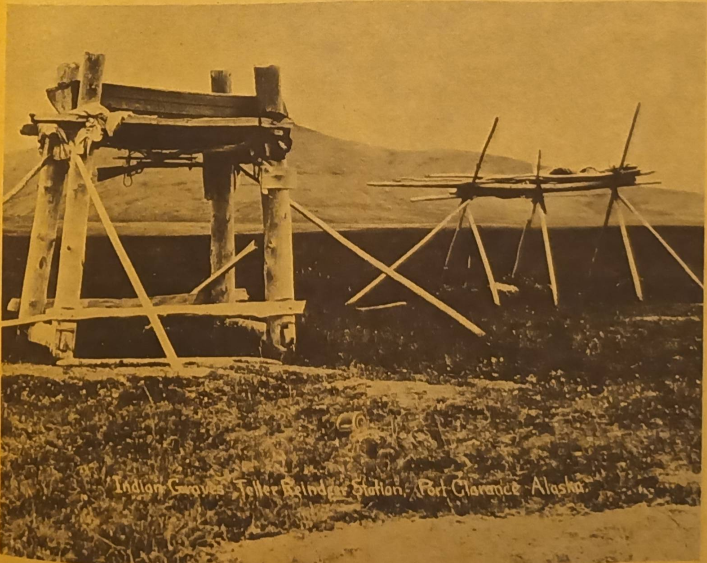
Just at the height of the excitement, soon after she broke in two, someone on the shore sighted a "man" swimming in from the wreck and heading right into sure death among those threshing boards. Everybody wanted to do something, but it was suicide to venture into that surf full of broken lumber. So they just watched and waited.

It was a long swim, but finally the swimmer came close to shore. Then everyone shouted. It was the ship's mascot pig. He swam through that boiling mass of wreckage and did not get a scratch! He was well received as he was the first live pig ever to set foot in that country. The sailors of his ship took him back on another boat.

During one of those big storms a ten-ton whale was blown up on shore at Cape Nome, 12 miles east of town. He had been feeding in shallow water and was caught by a sudden southeaster. It was not long before the Eskimos along the coast for 20 miles had moved down and camped there until that whale was reduced to blubber and oil. When the wind was from that direction, we at Nome could smell whale from 12 miles away. We afterward bought a gallon of its oil to be used on dog harness, mukluks and other leather, but drew the line at flavoring our meat and potatoes with it as the Eskimos did.

Indian burial racks at Teller Reindeer Station

University of Washington Photo


Indian Graves Teller Reindeer Station, Port Clarance Alaska.

Another thing happens during nearly every heavy storm which comes in off the sea. The Snake River empties just a short distance from town and is usually called the mouth of the river. But in this case it should be called the tail. It wags from side to side for a quarter of a mile. The surf throws up sandspits across the opening and this forces the river inland at high tide. When it comes back it cuts through anywhere and it has a half-mile front. Many a boat that put in for protection has been walled in behind a big sand bank and had to dig its way out again.

Among the thousands of gold seekers who came that spring was one man whose exploit was very amusing. He was a balloonist and worked this as a sideline. One day when there was a fair wind that blew straight along the coast he got his outfit ready. A large crowd gathered; he passed his hat. A crowd of 100 Eskimos assembled and were very much interested but did not have the least idea of what was going to happen. Finally they settled down on a lumber pile on the side that the balloon would travel when let go.

They sat there and watched the big gas bag gradually take life and slowly grow until it was full and swaying around in the wind. The miners' attention now was directed to the Eskimos on the lumber pile. Suddenly the balloon man shouted, "Let her go!" Up she shot into the air and right toward the lumber pile. The Eskimos probably thought they were going to be killed as they just fairly fell over one another in their mad scramble to get away from the monster about to pounce upon them. As the big bag passed over them they were again bewildered to see a man hanging onto the ropes attached to it and sailing away up into the sky. When the balloonist cut loose with his parachute and dropped into the sea near shore to swim to land, they talked among themselves as if that man were supernatural.

During this summer of the big rush all the newcomers seemed to be gold crazy. Everybody was rushing here and there, buying outfits from the trading companies, making trips back into the hills for gold claims and finding none but what were staked or being worked. These trips to the back country with heavy packs on their backs soon took the gold fever out of them. They would return to town after abandoning everything out on the trail, to try the gambling tables for passage money to the outside. Toward the last of the season, there were thousands of men—not miners—walking around, looking for some way to get back to the States before winter set in. Those who could raise $25 would sometimes get steerage passage out on a freighter. Revenue cutters called late in the fall to take them out, those that were flat broke.

During the first half of September we had fine weather with little or no rain. Shippers took on new confidence and unloaded merchandise with more vigor until the beach was piled high again with mining machinery, boilers, sheet-iron, sacks of coal, baled hay, furniture and every other kind of commodity.

EVENTS AT NOME DIGGINGS

MINERS had the beach diggings again in full working order, when one night a sudden hurricane came in from the southeast. Everyone who had goods on the beach rushed out to save what he could. By daylight it was a sad mess. Water and sand had undermined hundreds of heaps of valuable goods and tipped them into the sea. They were washed back and forth by the waves until everything was broken and twisted; engines and boilers were filled with sand and settled into beach mire.

An acquaintance of mine had anticipated a small fortune if he could get in some coal from the outside before the freeze-up. He went out to Seattle, bought 200 tons, and had it shipped in 100-pound sacks to Nome to be landed on the beach before acceptance by him. His coal arrived during the latter part of the nice weather. The ship's men piled it on the beach, quite close to the high tide water line.

Several days passed while he was putting up a building for its storage back on the tundra. Before the building was ready a storm broke loose and tipped about 100 tons into the sea. He saved about ten tons that did not have any sand in it.

He had been offered a $10-a-ton profit on the whole lot while it lay in a pile on the beach, but he gambled for a much larger profit before the next spring. He lost about $10,000. Coal that winter sold for $100 a ton.

The summer of the big rush, tramp steamers and sailing craft had difficulty in getting stevedores and longshoremen. They offered $2 an hour and men were hard to get. I knew of instances where men hired on under different names and drew down $4 an hour every time they changed shifts.

Speaking of passengers reminds me of the first trip in of the steamship *San Pedro*, which had a long passenger list. She arrived about five miles offshore during a heavy storm. The ship hung around for a day or so with those passengers leaning over the rail, looking longingly at the "Gold Coast," and losing valuable time. It was not long before the more venturesome persuaded the skipper to "heave to" long enough to let them launch a couple of boats and head for shore, going with the wind and swells. In those large ship's boats everything went well while they were over deep water.

We saw those two boats leave the *San Pedro* and pull in for shore. When they got to a point about a mile out they began to disappear behind each large wave, one boat behind the other. At half a mile out they were standing on end.

When the boats reached shallow water, where the surf is so rough and choppy that a log would come to grief, we saw just what we expected. They rode right side up until within 300 yards of shore. Then both, caught by a huge wave, were cast sideways and capsized, throwing about 50 men into that ice cold storm-tossed surf. Some tried to get onto the upturned boats; some hung to the life-lines; some struck out to swim ashore; each wave covered them over completely but drove them toward safety.

They had been warned before leaving the ship that if it was necessary to swim not to burden themselves with much clothing and to kick off their rubber boots. Because of this warning not one man drowned. But such a bedraggled bunch we never saw before. We onshore gathered them in almost exhausted and administered liquor to each one. They soon revived and even began looking for their luggage.

One nice day while eating dinner, my partner happened to look out of the door toward the beach and saw a long line of greasy looking Eskimos coming up the path. They were our old friends from up country, where we had visited during the winter, old Hook-a-ma-glook and about a dozen of his nearest relatives. He had followed the directions on the map we gave him. They came down in one of their oomiaks, a whaleskin boat. We made a regular dinner for them. It was amusing to see the astonishment they expressed at everything; it was their first visit to any town. We took them around to the stores, gambling spots and dance halls and explained things as best we could.

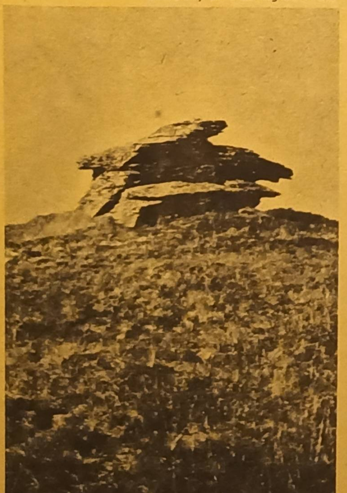
They brought some made-up sealskin garments, dried fish for dog feed, and four large walrus tusks of pure-raw ivory to sell to the trading companies. All their money they exchanged for white man's grub and finery.

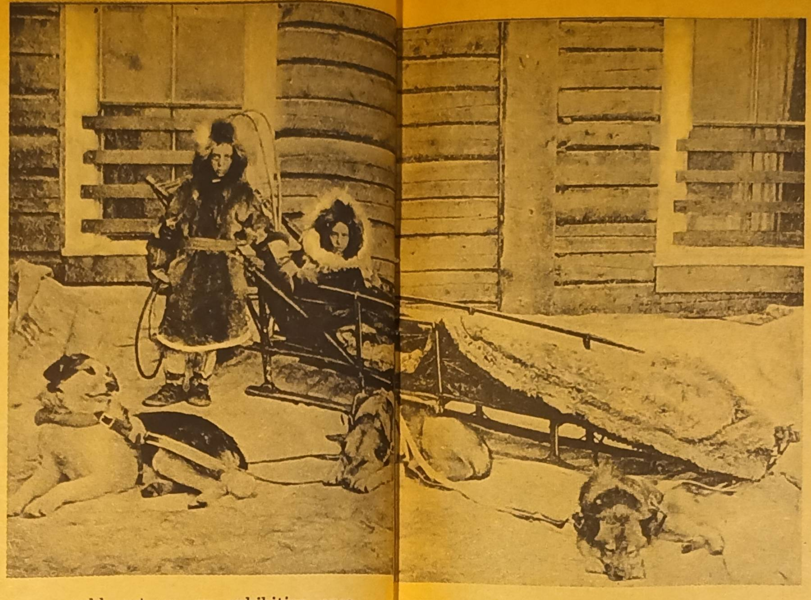
They stayed around town for a week or so and gave us an opportunity to witness the most expert boat handling in a high surf that we had ever seen. No matter how rough the surf, they would launch that big skin boat, with their families in it, and ride up and down the coast just for exercise or change of location. Then they would land again, always on the crest of the third wave (which is the largest) and would land high and dry with the boat sideways. After they pulled the boat up and turned it over, their house was all set and in order. The family lived under their boat all summer, making short cruises up and down the coast.

Eskimos are highly expert in handling their skin boats and are fearless in rough water, although they cannot swim, never having learned on account of the water's being so cold. The young men would put on an exhibition once in a while in their one-man kayaks.

Anvil Rock, a noted landmark

University of Washington Photo





Dogs and sledge in northern Alaska

This skiff is all decked in with sealskin except a small round hole, just large enough for a man to sit down in. When one gets seated in the boat, he ties his rain slicker tight around the top of the hole and pulls a puckering string around his face on the hood and around the wrists, making his kayak water tight. In their play they will tip one another upside down in the water. With paddles made double-ended, they are so skilled that with a certain movement of the paddle they can flop back on top again like a duck.

Waterproof clothing is worn nearly all summer because the rainy season usually lasts most of the season. Eskimos make their own waterproof slickers out of the gut of the seal, little strips about three inches wide and a foot or so long being sewn together with deer sinew or gut thread. A raincoat is the same shape as a parka, weighs about four or five ounces, and can be folded up into a man's hat.

Before they left for the country, we helped the squaws get their flour, baking powder, salt, sugar, a stove and numerous other articles, then bade them goodbye. The next summer I saw some of them again at Teller, but they had gathered many of the white man's customs and vices by that time and were quite up-to-date.

While I was walking downtown one evening, a couple of gun shots rang out close by in one of the big gambling houses. One of the most notorious gamblers, Dago Jack, had got into a quarrel, over a poker game, with Texas Scotty. It seemed that Scotty beat the Dago to the draw by a split second. As I came in they were picking him up out of the sawdust to see if he was dead. They toted him out onto the front walk, and let him drop just as one would a log, to lie there until the miners' marshal should come around, as it was up to him to get rid of the corpse.

When the officer came he saw at a glance that he had to take care of the dead gambler; the latter had no friends and no one volunteered to help. The marshal first asked, "Who killed him?"

A miner spoke up and said, "Texas Scotty beat him to the draw."

The marshal then turned to some of the other men and asked if that was right. That was the sum total of Texas Scotty's trial for killing a man. It was not murder in those days—just a fair and square gunfight. The marshal got help to take the body down to the beach and put it into a rowboat. Taking a shovel, he got into the boat and pulled up the coast beyond the beach miners' diggings to bury the man. He never did get through cussing about the "damn fool men with no friends getting shot up in this country."

Nome's official cemetery was a mile west of town on the tundra. Every grave had to be dug down through frozen dirt whatever the time of year, as the frost never comes out more than a few inches and only then in the summer months. The heavy thickness of tundra moss, which acts like a blanket of sawdust in an ice house, holds the frost.

The Arctic gambling and dancehall was the most popular saloon in town or in all Alaska, at that time. The fall before, its owner, Tex Rickard (the same Tex Rickard who was later known far and wide as the biggest prizefighter promoter in the world) had gone out to 'Frisco and bought the fixtures of a first class city saloon. He had them shipped in and set up so that his place was the drawing card of the whole country—it had brass foot and arm rails, a mahogany bar with a very fancy array of mirrors behind it, and some fine life-sized paintings.

The gambling tables of Tex's saloon were usually quite well patronized. The richer the miner, the higher the stakes for which he played. Chips were from two-bits to $100 apiece. The faro tables got the high-priced players and the crap tables, the two-bits. I saw games of faro where there were $25,000 worth of chips in sight on the tables at one time. I happened to be present at the longest run of lucky passes that ever happened in the gambling world, made by a miner at shooting craps.

MINERS ENJOY A FIST FIGHT

HE MADE 32 seven or eleven passes in succession on a two-bit bet. After he had made about a dozen straight passes everyone in the house came over and placed a bet on his lucky streak. They would let their bets ride for only three or four passes, then pull down. His unusual luck made me excited enough to let my two-bits ride for eight passes and I pulled down $64. Had I let it ride for eight more passes it would have netted me $6,384, but my courage came all too late in the game. His lucky streak failed him just when we were getting interested. The miner himself made only a few dollars because he kept pulling down every few passes.

It was in this same saloon that I saw the biggest and hardest fight between two big men that I ever witnessed, including the make-believe ones of the movies. Two miners sauntered in and draped themselves over the bar for a spell, while they absorbed a fair portion of red liquor. One was a short heavy-set man, the other tall and wiry. Both had whiskers but that does not mean much in that country. It does not even denote old age but it does mean that the man is not a lawyer or a "tinhorn" gambler.

After they had consumed enough to put them in a singing mood, the short one got a little too noisy and the bouncer of the house apparently requested him to cease the loud stuff. Shorty resented the interference. Words led to more words, so the bouncer started to hustle him out the door. He did not get far, as the big lanky fellow put his hand on the bouncer's shoulder, turned him around quickly and planted a big fist in his ear, knocking him flat.

The bouncer soon was on his feet and the fight was on. Shorty stood back and grinned, for he knew what was really in the make-up of his lanky pal.

They fought and fought. The crowd formed a ring in the big room and each side had its followers. They had the usual amount of clothing on when they started, but it was not long before their shirts were torn to shreds. They were pretty evenly matched for the first half hour, but after that, the miner showed more pep and was more spry. Both were so tuckered out that when one was knocked down he had to take his time to get on his feet again, while the other stood there and waited for him to get up.

After they had fought for a full hour, the bouncer pushed the other so that he fell against the bar. One of the bartenders grabbed an empty bottle and reached over to hit the miner on the head. Just as he was about to do so he was kicked in the face by a miner who was standing on top of the bar. By the time the bartender got up, the miner was out among the crowd. It was everybody's fight, but let one man interfere and he was severely dealt with.

Tex watched it from start to finish but said and did nothing. He enjoyed a good square fight. When it was over the poor bouncer was a sight. He went around for a couple of weeks with his head all bandaged up. The two miners went back to their claims thinking they had been having a good time!

Speaking of fights reminds me of a fracas that took place on the main street of Nome when a man and a woman were the star actors. One day during the height of the newcomers' excitement, two old street bums, tanked up with red liquor, were hanging around waiting for something to happen. Coming up the street toward them was a good-looking young woman dressed in knickers, hiking around sight-seeing.

When the two bums saw the girl they assumed she was a new dancehall female from the outside and spoke to her in none too respectful language. She paid no attention until one of them took hold of her arm and said: "Wait a minute, baby, I want to talk to you."

"Take your hands off of me, will you?" and she gave him a slap across the face.

He let go of her arm and muttered: "You little snip, I'll fix—"

That was as far as he got. She swung around and gave him a lefthand sock in the jaw that staggered him.

So surprised and enraged was he that he made a lunge to gather her in his arms, but she side-stepped him and put a hard right hand punch to the pit of his stomach, which knocked him out. He lay on the ground gasping for breath.

Turning to the other fellow, she then inquired, "What did you say?"

He was out of her reach by that time and replied to her question with the single word, "Nothing."

This young lady happened to be the daughter of one of the best athletic instructors and trainers of prizefighters on the Pacific Coast. She was up in the gold country on a vacation with her father.

Another odd incident happened in a Nome saloon about this time. Two big Swede miners whom everyone knew to be good claim owners came in one evening pretty well loaded with liquor. One of them spied a fly crawling up the back of a lady in a large oil painting which hung behind the bar. He pulled his gun and remarked he wasn't going to let a fly bite a lady. Everybody in the saloon crawled under tables or got up out of the sawdust. When a gun barks in those places everyone flattens out.

In the Nome country the rainy season starts early in June and from then until freeze-up time one needs to wear a slicker and rubber boots at all times if he is outside. It rains about three-quarters of the time, a steady drizzle. One gets used to it after awhile, and really does not notice it in his usual work.

All mining operations, freight hauling and mushing on the trail back to the creeks is done more than half the time in a drizzling rain. One can imagine what a mess this condition would make along the beach where hundreds of tons of merchandise and other equipment are piled with no covering whatever.

Conditions like these go on until fall, when the winds change into the north to bring down snow flurries and blizzards. People who desire to stay there begin to scurry for winter quarters and those who are seeking passage back to the States are selling off their few chattels and eagerly scanning the sea for a ship.

After the big rush of people and "law and order" came into Nome, several instances of "salting a mine" occurred. The practice of salting a mine occurs only in localities where they have so-called court protection—that is, something to restrain the miners from hanging the man who tries to pull a crooked deal on some other miner, because there

In 1898, this was the oldest house in Juneau City, Alaska

are no shyster lawyers to prolong a court action for embezzlement and have the case dismissed.

A noted case of this nature developed that fall at the mouth of Anvil Creek. Two sharpers bought a tundra claim opposite a sharp curve in this creek. On the supposition that the original creek bed and pay streak at one time was located under their claim, they sank a shaft twelve feet deep and started in to drift. They worked for two months or more and dug out a pile of dirt nearly ten feet high, letting nobody near to examine the pile as they dug it out, but giving out reports that they had good pay dirt. Just about freeze-up time they got the Lane Mining Company interested in the purchase of their claim, their price being $100,000. It looked good and was in a likely location.

Lane Company had just purchased a good claim at the head of Anvil for $90,000 and it was paying them well. The Company sent out an expert to examine this new property and take samples of the dump, because the shaft had caved in and no prospect could be taken from underground. The prospect of the dump showed good pay, and the expert almost decided to report favorably when, in his last pan, he noticed a small piece of quicksilver amalgam which the beach miners use to pick up their gold out of the black sand at clean-ups. The expert discovered right then that those miners had sprinkled a little gold over every bucket full of dirt that they had put in that pile, and they had used beach gold to salt their mine. The case was reported and the "miners" soon left for parts unknown.

Another common way of salting was to load a shotgun with coarse gold and shoot it into the unmined dirt, which shows up as a good prospect when panned out. Still another trick was to roll the "makin's" into a cigarette with a few colors of gold in the tobacco and smoke it while panning a prospect, letting the ashes drop into the pan.

In the late summer we heard rumors of a good strike having been made on a creek they named Gold Run, back in the hills behind Port Clarence Bay in the upper country. There were many other rumors of good strikes coming in at all times. We paid little attention to most of them. But a month or so before freeze-up time I received a location notice, in my name, of a claim staked on Gold Run Creek. The party who staked this claim for me did it through my power of attorney, given him before he left town several months before.

He, of course, received a half interest in all claims he could stake by power of attorney. Along with my notice came the report of a rich strike on this creek. After showing my recorded location notice to some of the men I was immediately urged to sell an interest. I did sell one-eighth of my half for $2,200 cash down, the balance after inspection, to a man named Bud Small.

In order to verify our agreement and inspection, we had to make a trip of 100 miles up the coast. We boarded a steam whaling vessel which was going up to Teller. The captain dropped us off at a setlement of three cabins, called Bering City, in Port Clarence Harbor. From there we had to pack back twelve miles over rough hilly country into the mountains to this creek. Arriving there we saw about a dozen men, all on one claim, working rockers along the edge of the stream. All were working for Jim Tait, the man who had staked the claim for me. His claim which was discovery, was very rich; mine was No. 5 above.

JUMPING CLAIMS IS PERILOUS

WE WENT on up the creek to our claim but saw no one at work along the way and wondered why. We investigated our stakes and found that all the creek had been staked early in the spring by other prospectors. Here we were on a claim-jumping expedition! Right there we figured that the less we had to do with that business, the healthier it would be for our skins.

Going back down to Tait's camp, we told him it was all off with our jumping other men's claims; if he wanted to take the chance of getting shot that was his look-out. When he first came there he went back to Teller with a fine prospect in his poke and offered a bunch of men a 50-50 lay if they brought their own rockers. He said they could clean up to to 20 ounces of gold a day, roughly $150,000 to $300,000. He got the men who were willing to chance a shot through their systems for such good picking.

A narrow run of gold crossed the creek at this claim and made it very rich. Before leaving, however, I waded out onto a shallow point where the water was about a foot deep, clear as crystal, and running slowly. There were some flat slabs of rock covered with a black sediment on the bottom. I lifted one up edgewise and let the water wash the black stuff downstream. When the water cleared there was a yellow streak of coarse gold an inch wide and as long as the slab. The whole creek opposite this claim was covered with that sediment and gold dust. I dared not use a shovel to test the gravel down under those slabs because Tait was watching me, but judged it was very rich.

We moved off the creek pronto. The next boat would probably bring in a dozen men who rightfully owned those claims and there would be some shooting. And sure enough, two days later a boat brought in some men who had staked those claims first. When they learned that their claims were being worked by jumpers, they went out prepared for a fight.

Opposite Tait's camp there was a high ridge with huge boulders on it. The claim owners stopped up there and sent one man down to warn the jumpers to make a peaceful getaway. Some pulled out very fast, but some hesitated, among them, this man Tait. Very soon about a dozen bullets dropped into the water alongside the men running the rockers. There was an immediate halt in all mining operations and the jumpers scattered in all directions, up and down the creek, without stopping for any of their camp equipment.

During the couple of weeks that Tait worked that claim he must have cleaned up from the time he jumped those claims, $1,000 each. It was said afterward that the real owners were a bunch of timid and peace-loving citizens, instead of the usual run of hard-boiled miners. If they had been the latter, somebody would have been killed and all the gold that had been cleaned up taken by the original stakers.

Tait, who we thought a fine fellow up to the time he jumped those claims, was a crook from the States and had done a stretch in the San Quentin Penitentiary in California.

On our way in from our Gold Run Creek adventure we met Alaska's herd of reindeer, numbering 1,500, being herded by a half-dozen Eskimos and two Laplanders. In 1893, the U. S. Government imported from northern Siberia 60 reindeer, and in 1896 brought in 300 more. In 1899 they had increased to 1,500; in 1916 they numbered 40,000; and in 1929, 1,150,000.

My partner Bud and I hung around Bering City for a few days and heard the latest news about the epidemic among the Eskimos. It seemed the only cause of the terrible death rate was the fact that in the spring of that year, 1900, we had had some six weeks of fine balmy sunshiny (back home June) weather. The Eskimos lived chiefly on greasy fish and oil. Their systems were so saturated with oily food that when a warm sunny spell came, they died wholesale. Entire camps were in some instances wiped out. On our trail from Bering to Teller, a distance of eight miles, we saw three dead Eskimos, two men and a squaw, half a mile apart. Evidently they had been striving to reach Teller.

A miner said an Eskimo camp a few miles down the coast from the latter town had burying racks overloaded with new bodies and individual equipment. He did not stop to investigate but thought the whole tribe had been wiped out. The Eskimos bury their dead on racks built on poles off the ground high enough so that the dogs cannot reach them, and, of course, all personal effects belonging to the dead Eskimo are placed on the rack beside the body.

While we were waiting for something to turn up, something did. A man named Pop Gulliver, an old hardrock miner from Nevada, came in from Gold Run with just the same tale of woe that we had out there. He said he was on his way up into the Koogrock River country to see a claim he had staked the winter before when the snow was deep, on a creek that he had named Garfield. He had recorded his location notice at Teller, which was about 80 miles from the creek. During the summer other prospectors had found gold and were working claims in the district. Old Pop was highly interested to know whether or not it was on his creek and invited us to go with him. We three bought a boat and grub enough for a month's trip and started. We outfitted at Teller.

The outer harbor of Port Clarence Bay extends back about 25 miles from the ocean proper. Ages ago it extended back about four miles; time and action of tides, ice and other disturbances had formed a sand spit from both sides nearly across the bay, leaving a narrow channel about 500 feet wide.

The sand spit is wide enough to admit plenty of space for the town of Teller, which at that time (1900) had about 100 inhabitants. The ebb and flow of the tide sent a great flood of water through this narrow channel in both directions. It was amusing to watch inexperienced miners try to manipulate a boat across that current and be carried about a mile out into the bay before they could get out of it.

Teller in those days was strictly a miners' town, consisting of miners' supply outfits, saloons, gambling and dancehalls, log huts, tents, and board houses with sheet-iron roofs.

One morning the three of us assembled our outfit and headed north, straight across the middle of the inner bay, which is twelve miles long and six wide. With the past experience of handling boats on our trip down the Mackenzie I felt quite safe on that little body of water. Before leaving the shore I secured a pole to be used as a mast in case we got a favorable wind.

Soon after leaving shore the fair wind did come, right from the south, and kept on increasing until we were out five or six miles; by then it began to be serious. We had to haul in our blanket sail and hold fast. The waves lapped over the sides of the boat; the wind drove us at a fast clip without a sail up. I kept the boat headed for the mouth of the river through a large canyon we could see ahead, hoping that the other two boys could bail the water fast enough for us to reach a sheltered spot out of that terrific wind.

We were finally blown into the canyon; Bud looked at his watch and exclaimed that we had done those twelve miles in not much over an hour. He added that he had done more silent praying in that hour than he had done in all his life before.

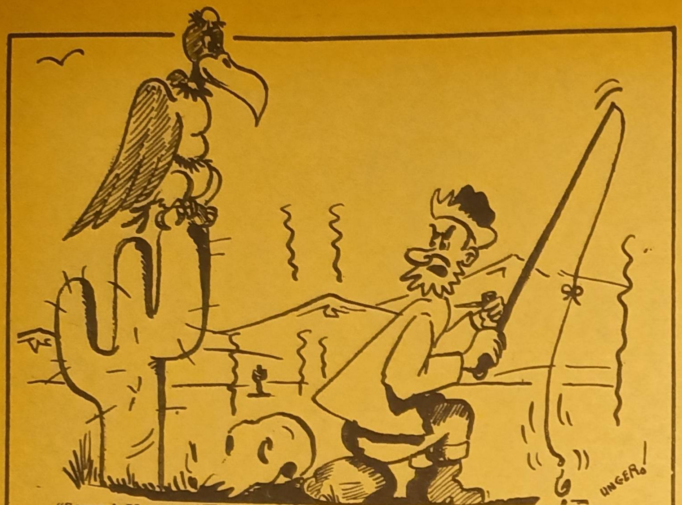
I must have been pretty well scared too or I would have noticed the loss of one of the oars. I was steering with the other one. We were all glad that part of the voyage was over and with no serious mishaps. But we had to go ashore and whittle out another oar from driftwood.

When starting again, it was noticed that the river was flowing quite rapidly upstream, due to the incoming tide and high wind. We proceeded forthwith to float with it.

MARY'S IGLOO

AFTER DRIFTING upstream for a couple of miles, our attention was called to a very unusual disturbance down the river behind us. It sounded like the noise of a distant steamboat, but we soon saw the spout of a pilot whale, coming around the bend in the river. We pulled for shore just in time to see about 40 or 50 spouts coming up behind the first one. The first spout had disappeared by this time, then the main herd began to cease their spouting, until all was quiet again. Very soon the pilot came up and turned his waterworks on, then after the main herd went

Indian women selling wares, Juneau



"Scram! If anyone saw me talking to you, they'd think I was nuts!"

past us, they too let loose their squirt guns, and likewise the rear pilot whale. It seems that these white whales travel in herds and always have a pilot or guard, both in front and in the rear, to warn of danger.

After that bunch of destruction had gone up the river ahead of us, the trip up did not look so good. We would surely pass them on their way out from the lake back to the sea, as the water in the river for some 50 miles up beyond the lake was very rough because of rapids.

Dropping out into midstream again, we floated up about five or six miles, then entered another big lake nearly as large as our stormy one. We decided to pull to shore there and make camp for the night.

Just as our boat was within 50 feet of the shore, we were terrified to see right beside the boat a big black shiny object eight or ten feet long and three feet wide come slowly to the surface and wiggle away from us. After our first fright we recognized it as a black porpoise. We had seen them before in big herds passing up and down the Nome coast.

During the rest of the day—for it was quite early yet—we saw something that would interest those who are fond of fishing, those fellows in particular who live in the north-central States and who will stand all day at a hole in the ice, in bitter cold weather, to catch a few crappies. We actually saw fish so thick in the water that those on the outer edge were pushed out onto the land, in their effort to escape that herd of white whales that was driving them around the lake.

There were great schools of fish in a body, some schools as large as the area of a city block, rushing past us, their great numbers forcing the upper ones clear out on top of the water. That big bunch of whales had chased the fish from the big lake ahead of them up the river, and trying to round them up in this upper lake had caused much commotion. There probably was a herd of porpoises in that lake also, trying to get a feed of fish; at least there was one big fellow that we knew for sure was there.

Next morning we pulled out in a cold drizzly rain, for the mouth of the Koogrock River. After rowing about six miles, we entered the marshy delta with its hundred channels and gradually worked our way up through them for two or three more miles before reaching the solid canyon-like walls of the river proper.

About one more mile and we came to Mary's Igloo, a place which is put on every map of Alaska. Not a town or Government post, not even a post office, was this Mary's Igloo. But every man in the North has heard of this stopping place, this roadhouse, so to speak, because of its proprietor, Old Mary. She was an Eskimo woman who became a widow through the accidental death of her husband—he was caught in an ice jam. Left with nine children, she adopted four more little ones who had become orphans through sickness.

Mary fed and reared all 13 until they reached maturity. She made her livelihood by catching and drying fish for dog feed, which she sold to the miners. When the children were old enough to catch seals in the winter, she made and sold sealskin garments. Her igloo was one big room built on top of the ground in a clump of cottonwood on the edge of the river, in the same place where Mary's ancestors, for a thousand years back, may have built their igloos, when the edge of the lake was near them. This was long before the river had carried down the silt from its upper reaches in the divides of the Arctic Ocean and Kotzebue Sound and deposited it for miles out into the salt lake at its mouth.

The U. S. Government has since changed the name from Koogrock to Mary's River in honor of the good-hearted old Eskimo woman. We camped there for a day to see them catch fish, also to wait for the water to calm down after a heavy rain up-country.

Fortunately, Mary's brood was not affected by the Eskimo plague that took its toll that spring. The farther inland we got, the lower the death rate.

Talk about catching fish! There was nothing to it for Mary and her kids. We watched two little boys with a seine about 25 feet long—one boy walking on the shore, the other in a skin boat—circle out around in the river and haul in a wagon box full of fine big red king salmon and numerous other fish. One boy stuck a stake in the mud to hold the seine, the other tied his boat to shore and the two of them waded into that mess of fish, dipping up the big ones with a net and throwing them into their boat.

When they got all the larger fish they let the small ones go. They kept at this until their boat was very nearly full, then they paddled it up to their landing. The girls and other kids took care of the fish after that. They split the fish down each side of the backbone, cut off the heads, then hung them over suspended poles to dry. Sometimes they put a fire under to hasten the process of drying and smoking. Mary had several hundred feet of pole racks of drying fish and was still gathering more. She also had about 100 dogs of all ages. She raised dogs for the market. They were regular Huskies and Malemutes, the best kind of sled dogs.

After getting some instructions about the rapids and other dangerous places on the river far above, we pulled out to do some more exploring. Be it said this was a new field to us three. Pop had been up at the head of the river before but he had gone in overland by dog team, so he knew nothing more of this river than Bud and I did.

It started to rain the day we left Mary's Igloo, and it rained and drizzled for two weeks steady. We sat in the boat and paddled, everything sopping wet; we lined the boat up along the shore in swift water; we portaged everything in bad places—and all the time it rained. We pitched our tent every night in the rain. The worst thing about the whole trip was building a fire to cook our meals. In the first place there was no wood of any description larger than brush, and the farther up the river the shorter the brush. Often it was impossible to build a fire at all; the dead brush was wet clear through and the green brush would not catch fire. We kept this up for about two weeks, until we reached the vicinity of Garfield Creek, 80 miles by water from Teller.

Old Pop had tied (marked for location) in this creek to an odd-shaped mountain peak resembling an old-style locomotive smokestack. When we spotted that, he knew where he was. We beached the boat, took our tents and packs and started up over the hills toward the smokestack. It was raining when we left the boat, but after we had walked two miles and climbed half a mile up the mountainside, the rain turned into snow. Pop located his creek, and going down into it we found his stakes. But to his great astonishment he discovered that he had staked his claim on a "pup" to the main creek.

The winter before, he and his partner had camped over the divide and in a snowstorm had made a trip over to this location. Thinking it was a long creek they staked it and returned to town to have the location recorded on Garfield Creek. His being the first claim on this creek, he had the right to name it.

During the summer other miners located pay dirt on the main creek, and recorded their claims on Garfield Creek, and poor old Pop's claim was on a pup creek of the Garfield! We had made that long trip only to see that whole creek staked from top to bottom.

AN ARCTIC WHALING SHIP

HERE we were, up near the Arctic Ocean, late in the fall. Any day now a cold wind out of the north could fill those streams with pack ice and make it dangerous to travel by boat. So we hurried back to the river to begin a homeward trek. About halfway down the river another large stream that came in from the east had just received a heavy rain and was flowing full to its banks. From there on down to the lakes we did not have to do any more portaging; the big river was high enough so that we ran the rapids.

If one wants real sport, a thrill that is a thrill, let him start in a small boat at the head of one of those Alaska rivers and run the unknown rapids all the way down to the mouth.

I said we ran all the rapids. But I will add that three times we repaired our boat to the extent of patching up the bottom which had come in contact with unchartered boulders. But we always had time to paddle ashore before sinking.

Old Pop was no boatman and he knew it. He would not offer to do any steering in rough water. Bud and I were tired one day so, opposite a nice long stretch of smooth river, we asked Pop to watch the boat and just drift along so that we could lie back and rest a bit. Reluctantly, Pop took the steering oar and we were soon dozing. Everything seemed so peaceful and calm; now and then there was the splash of a muskrat, and the scenery was gliding past, when all of a sudden—bang!

Then followed some real Scotch cuss words and scratching on the side of the boat. When Bud and I recovered from our first scare, we both saw the funny side of the mishap. The more we laughed, the madder old Pop got. It seems that the high water had cut new channels across short bends in the river, where in ordinary water level there would not be any current at all and the grass and brush would grow. Poor Pop had let the boat drift down one of these channels and run head on into a cutbank at a sharp curve. Then the boat turned around and drifted backwards under some old brush hanging over the bank. That incident lightened Bud's and my burdens for the whole trip but Pop didn't see it that way.

When we came to the channel between the two lakes where we had met the whales, we were obliged to pull ashore and "bile the kittle," as Pop used to say, and wait for the tide to take us through. An incoming tide was flowing upstream like a swift river. After waiting five or six hours the flow took us through that canyon "just a-kiting." At the mouth of the river there were a couple of Eskimos with rifles, waiting for the coming out of the whale herd.

We landed back at Teller just three and one-half weeks after our departure, with nothing gained but a lot of hard experience and worn-out clothing. But we were thankful for one thing—the sight of a large ship, lying out in the harbor and making ready to sail for Nome. We lost no time in getting lined up for passage.

A deep-sea tug was plying between the town and the ship with passengers, mail and drinking sailors. This was the last ship out of that port for the season and everyone who intended to go down the coast before it froze up availed himself of this opportunity. The ship was a whaler, trading for ivory and Eskimo trinkets.

For the landlubber a word or two about the shape of a sea-tug. It is very short, heavily built, high in the bow on account of the two heavy engines located near the stern, and its pilot wheel is back near the engines.

An incident that occurred on the tug on our way out to the ship shows how accidents happen. When we rounded the spit and headed for the ship, our passengers with their luggage were all forward on deck, so that all the pilot could see was the tail masts of the whaler. He did not observe the dozens of Eskimo kayaks and oomiaks riding the water around the ship.

The Eskimos thought the tug would avoid their frail boats; the passengers thought the pilot knew his business. So no one warned him and the result was that we ploughed right into the skin boats of the Eskimos at nearly full speed, smashing up and tipping over three boats full of natives. There was a great commotion but it was too late. They threw over life belts, ropes and bales of dried fish to the floundering Eskimos. Their other boats came alongside soon and hauled them in. Fortunately there were none drowned though the Eskimos cannot swim. The tug captain had to make good their losses or take his chances of ever landing his boat at Teller.

We observed, before climbing aboard this ship, which was a four-masted steam whaler, that it really was an Arctic whale ship. A look at her crew, and a whiff of the odor of things on deck proved it. She smelled more like an Eskimo igloo than a ship. The crew, from the captain down, formed a hard-boiled

Traders bartering with the natives

lot. Every nationality on the globe was represented. They had to be hard to stand a trip such as those Arctic whalers have to endure in their three-years' cruise up among the icebergs. They spend two winters and three summers in order to get through the ice channels to reach the whaling waters, for one catch.

On our way down to Nome we often got into conversation with members of the crew. They wanted to know all about the gold mining situation, while we wanted to learn something of the whaling business. They had had rather a poor season, they said, only catching five whales in the Arctic Ocean, while the usual season's run would be eight or ten. The whales averaged about 35 tons of blubber, or 700 gallons of oil each, making a total of 35,000 gallons of oil in barrels on board ship. The ship smelled as though they were burning oil for fuel. They had rendered out all that blubber in large kettles, using the crackles of the first kettleful as fuel to do all the rest of their rendering. Every room, every railing and every piece of wood or iron was slimy with whale oil smoke.

As soon as we were outside the harbor entrance, the engine was shut off to save coal, and all hands took to the rigging to set sail. In order to sail, the skipper had to tack close into the wind. The dim outlines of the coast were just visible in the distance through the rain. Owing to the fact that the coast has no distinct landmarks, we went a little too close in. Suddenly the old ship's bow grated on a sand bar, then amidship, then near the stern. She struck each time a receding swell let her down.

There was some excitement when she first struck. The captain gave quick orders and each man took to his separate task as the pilot swung over sharply to starboard. It threw the massive sails full into a head wind, and would probably break down a half dozen big yardarms when they flopped back. We landlubbers gazed in wonderment at the speed of those tough-looking sailors going up into that maze of rigging. In a few moments everything was loose and flopping in the wind. The ship turned out to sea and got the wind from the other side.

While this was going on there was a sailor on each side to heave the lead and take soundings to determine the depth of water. Getting out to sea about 20 miles, all sails were changed over again—the ship "came about." The captain then headed close into a headwind and ran all the way down to Nome.

On our arrival the sea was found too rough for boats to put off. All we had to do for two days was to stand on deck in the rain and watch the shoreline move slowly up and down. The skipper sailed his ship back and forth along the coast, six or eight miles out, so as not to be caught with a sliding anchor as so many other ships had been, and be blown into shallow water.

After this storm the usual debris lined the waterfront of Nome. Before it was cleaned up, early winter blasts of icy winds and snow completely tied up all mining operations for that year and part of the next.

During my stay around Nome I got acquainted with Bob Justin, the deputy recorder of the Nome district. Having the chance to verify all location notices, he closely scrutinized those on the rich paying creeks in the hope of discovering any unclaimed fraction. If a claim contains more than 20 acres, the fraction of land between his last official corner and the initial stake of the next claim becomes open for relocation no matter how large or small.

Bob discovered a fraction on Anvil Creek—the richest pay dirt producer in that country. He had no partner at that time, so he elected me to take that responsibility. This was in the late fall of 1900. Before we could start operations it froze up and prospecting was off until the next spring. Having become a claim owner on Anvil Creek, I was very much interested in the claim, even though it was only nine feet wide at one side and pinched out to a wedge about two-thirds of the way across the creek. We thought perhaps we could find the heavy pay streak on the wedge. According to the way it was running in gold, we would have a nice little jackpot of our own.

Winter and blizzards came on, but before they got too severe I made two or three trips out. Pulling my bed and grub on a toboggan, I started out for a week's stay to try for a prospect. I used an old tent that another miner had left and borrowed an old kerosene blowtorch to use for thawing the frozen gravel. It worked fairly well while there was oil in it, but how it could consume the oil! I found it would take another man's labor to pull enough kerosene out those seven miles to keep me going with that torch. And this was only a small prospect hole. So I gave up the idea of reaching bedrock until spring when we could dig down easily after the water had forced the frost out.

During those trips to and from the creek, I endeavored to shorten the trail three miles by climbing up a mountain and riding my toboggan down the other side into the creek. It is by the grace of God that I am here now to tell about it.

Claim No. 3 on Miller Creek, owned by Joseph Beaudreau, from which gold worth over $100,000 was taken

HOTEL
BEN & VAN'S
BED PALACE
REAL ESTATE
CIGARS

Bruce D. Giffen Photo

The "Store" at Dyea, Alaska

WE SAVE A LOST PROSPECTOR

FROM THE summit of this rugged mountain down the other side to the creek, there appeared to be a long valley, not too steep to attempt a ride down. So I bundled myself on top of my load and started down that three-quarter mile of unknown mountainside. I had two sticks to steer by and to use for brakes, thinking that I could control the speed downhill.

The north winds had blown the snow into this creek, and where it lodged it was 15 to 20 feet deep. At one point where there was a curve, the wind had created an eddy and whirled the snow in a large circle, leaving a hole in the center 50 feet across and 30 feet deep. It was a wild ride down the mountain. After the old toboggan got "het up" those sticks were no good as brakes, though they did help to steer. I went over large drifts and around curves like an express train, until I came within sight of a large dark spot in the valley ahead of me. There was no time to get off and investigate.

I bore down hard to starboard and just missed going head-first into that pit; as it was I went into it backwards. I had missed it just enough to strike one edge and slide around sideways, almost to the opposite side, then slide back down to the bottom of a 20-foot hole. I finished the rest of the trip downhill walking!

On my way back to town I tried out a new scheme in transportation, which on former trips across that broad stretch of unobstructed tundra had seemed feasible to me if one had a strong north wind in one's favor. Before leaving town I had rigged up a pair of small cat sails, also a short mast with guy ropes. When I reached the edge of the level tundra on my way home, I set sail on my toboggan. I found that by using a sail on each side of the mast and holding the boom lines in my hands, I could steer just where I wanted to go. There was a good tail wind which blew me along as fast as I cared to travel.

It was some satisfaction to sit there with no dogs pulling, yet tearing ahead at four times the speed of a dogteam, across those six or seven miles right into the edge of town. The people watched me sailing along over the snow. When I came to a stop they gathered to see what new kind of motor contraption I was riding on. As a southbound light transportation vehicle, over a level plain, it was a success—provided you did not hit any of the hundreds of mining claim stakes that stuck out of the snow all over the tundra.

On my next trip in from the creek the wind was blowing a gale and a flurry of snow was flying about a foot high, making it difficult to see ahead very far to locate those stakes. Half-way across the flat the wind made an extra spurt which sent my toboggan fairly humming along. What fun I was having, when without warning, "boom!" My little ship seemed to explode into a dozen pieces, and sent me reeling off into the snow. We hit one of those stakes, and it happened to be an extra large one frozen hard into the tundra. This put an end to that kind of travel; the smash surely did bust things up. This was the last time I went over that tundra in winter.

In the latter part of November reports came in that there had been a gold strike made up at Cape York, 200 miles up the coast northwest of Nome. The reports sounded good, coming at that time of the year when we had nothing to do to pass the time. So I took up partnership with a fellow named Tom Scott, one of the 50 men who had survived the wreck and swum ashore.

We spent a day assembling an outfit and cooking up our trail beans and rice separately. After they were cooked we would scatter them out in small lumps on a canvas outside to freeze so we could put them in a sack. When grub time came it took only ten minutes to get a frying pan full of hot steaming beans or rice. It saved a lot of time and labor on the trail.

We started just after a five-day blizzard had blown itself out. Traveling in blizzards did not seem so terrible to us as long as we followed the coastline where one could not get lost. By this time I was fairly familiar with the coast and the location of its possible camping stops, its deserted igloos, its Eskimo villages and two roadhouses. So I felt quite safe in attempting this trip at the beginning of winter, even though I had a partner who had never been out on a winter voyage before. Having seen him swim half a mile in a boiling surf and come ashore alive, he looked good to me.

The miners' cabins that were built under the lea of the bank along the coast and above the tidewater line, were entirely covered with snow that had drifted off the tundra. Their stove pipes all stuck up through the snow, but there were no other visible signs of any habitation. They had to tunnel through to the outside edge of the drift, where they hung up a canvas to block the entrance, and each morning they all had to extend their tunnels out some 10 to 25 feet to keep up with the edge of the drift. The drift would not get any thicker than the level of the tundra back of it, which was about 15 feet above the level of the sea ice.

Our trip was uneventful up to Shay's roadhouse, although we passed several herds of reindeer feeding on the tundra moss, attended by a dozen or more Eskimo boys each carrying a modern high-powered rifle to guard against stampeding by the native dogs. These Eskimos had two or three deer broken in to harness to pull a sled. Their harness consists of a skin collar and one tug. The animal travels on either side, sometimes astride the tug, and is guided by one line, certain jerks or pulls indicating which way to turn. Their sled was cut out of a log (merely a dugout) and pointed at one end. We never could figure out how anyone could stay in a round-bottom contraption like that, going over snowdrifts and constantly rolling from side to side behind one of those reindeer, at a speed of 10 to 15 miles an hour.

It was said that the chief Laplander herder up at Teller often drove his one reindeer down to Nome in one day, which is 80 miles. Nature has provided the reindeer with perpetually sharp shoes so that they can travel on very smooth ice with as much ease as on land. That speeding Lap must have taken to the ice most of the way down to Nome, as his big sled would pull easier.

After we had left Shay's roadhouse and gone three miles up the trail, we saw a black speck away in the distance. It was too early in the day to expect any mushers from that direction as the nearest roadhouse was 15 miles away, across the tundra at Bering City. Finally we made out a man coming at a very slow pace and seeming to be dizzy. When we met him he was nearly exhausted. His face was covered with a solid sheet of ice where his breath had frozen into his whiskers, with only a small hole through which he could breathe. We met him just in time; he would have dropped as had many others on those bleak Alaska trails. We cached our load by the side of the trail and returned to Shay's with him on the sled. But before starting we broke the ice off his face enough so that he could breathe more freely.

After he was thawed out and had regained his composure, he told us what had happened. His story still stands out as a record of real endurance under adverse conditions.

He had started from a cabin in Bering the morning of the day before, intending to reach Shay's the same day. But about half way, while he was crossing a large bay, a blizzard overtook him and blotted out his trail. He plodded on in the direction he had been traveling, with the storm at his back. It seems he lost his bearing just opposite the end of the big sawtooth ridge of mountains where the trail passes.

The barrier of high peaks had changed the direction of the wind, which caused him to turn off to the left and follow a course at right angles to the trail. He did not realize he was lost until it began to get dark; then he became panicky and wandered aimlessly all night. At daylight he located himself from the coastline about two miles away and headed for the spot where the main trail passed. By keeping in motion all night he avoided freezing except for his whiskers. The man recovered, for I saw him the next fall when he shipped as a sailor on a boat for the outside.

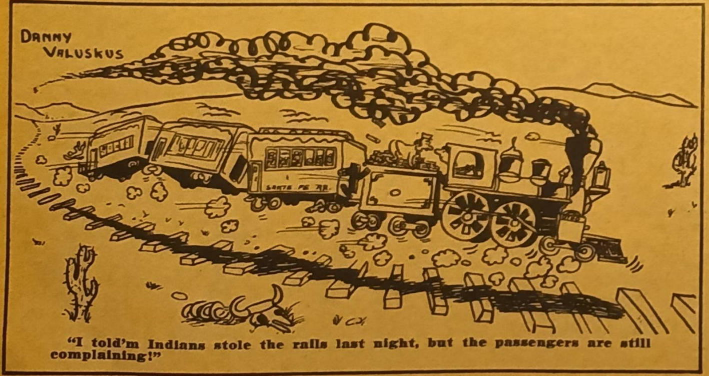
We went back, picked up our load and headed off to the left of the trail which would lead us past the Eskimo camp that Al and I had visited before. I was much interested in learning how our old friend Mook-a-ma-glook and his tribe had pulled through the epidemic that past spring. Before reaching their igloos we knew that death had visited their camp because the number of their cemetery pole racks had increased materially. When we got down into their igloos there were not half as many Eskimos to greet us as before.

Their camp lost 30 of its members, among them the old Mook-a-ma-glook. The camp was still shrouded in gloom. The older squaws would sit down occasionally and drone lamentations for their dear ones that had been taken off so suddenly.

WE GET CLOSE TO SIBERIA

WE HAD planned on staying with them for a couple of days, but owing to the gloomy atmosphere and the droning of the squaws, we pulled out on the second morning and headed up coast, hoping the channel into Port Clarence Bay was frozen over. After mushing a couple of miles gloom overtook us too, when we discovered open water a mile wide in the channel. To detour on the ice would mean an extra trip of 30 miles. We decided to go back to the Eskimos and borrow one of their whaleskin boats. We first had to dig it out of the snow, then load a 20-foot boat on a 6-foot sled with the dogs hitched away ahead.

The boat was very light so we had no trouble transporting it to open water. We had to patch up a seam or two with reindeer tallow, as it leaked some when it struck water. After loading the sled, grub, dogs and ourselves into the boat, we pulled off for the other side. It was a pull against a stiff wind and the thermometer was around zero.



"I told'm Indians stole the rails last night, but the passengers are still complaining!"

Ice formed on the paddles; water froze onto everything it touched. But we got across and pulled everything out on the ice. The boat was turned upside down and staked to the ice by chopping a shallow hold and filling it with water, into which we put the end of a sealskin rope so that it would freeze fast. We took that precaution to keep it from blowing away. We still had six miles to go before dark, to reach the old deserted igloo in which we camped for the night. It was fast work in a day with only six hours of daylight. Our night's rest there was more enjoyable than back with the Eskimos. We did not have to listen half a dozen times during the night to the droning call of the squaws to a departed spirit.

Taking the trail again the next morning, we headed for a cape some 20 miles away that stuck far out into the Arctic channel, the most westerly point on the North American Continent and not many miles from Cape Prince of Wales. Eventually arriving at that point called Cape York, after two days of hard mushing, the first thing in our minds was the reported gold strike. Some men had come in from Teller with the news a few days ahead of us, but had gone back before we arrived.

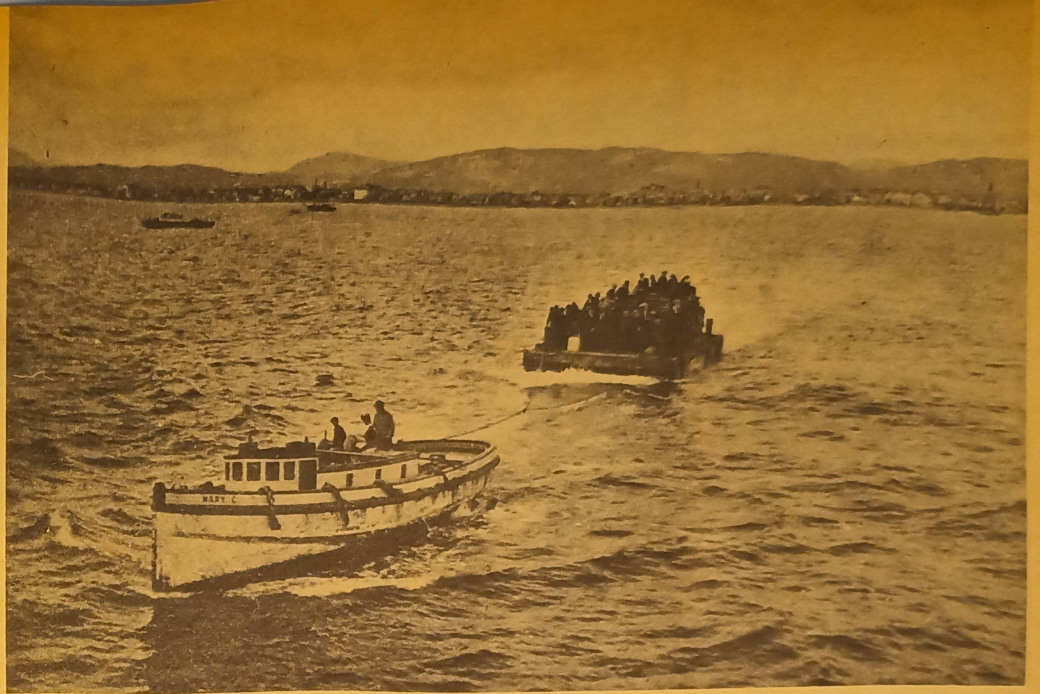
There were no white men's cabins or buildings, only Eskimo igloos for shelter, the igloos being very thinly populated owing to the epidemic that year. Since there were no white men here we could get no news of the strike but did some tramping up into the hills and found new sets of stakes on several claims. We added two more to the string.

While we were there we happened to have a very mild spell of weather. The sun actually came out and did its best to warm things up, but its efforts were weak. It got no higher than ten feet above the horizon, across the southern sky, and was in sight for only about three hours each day. Twilight lasted one and a half hours each night and morning.

While resting we hauled a load of driftwood up a creek for a couple of miles and tried some prospecting. Thawing down to bedrock, which was only a couple of feet deep, we panned out the usual colors which can be found all over Alaska. Some newcomer had panned around there and discovered a pocket, probably without investigating further. The creek was staked by the would-be stampeder, with the same handwriting on all the notices.

We pulled out of there for another headland about 15 miles farther on. A couple of miles before reaching our destination, we noticed a fault in the heavy shore ice, where one large sheet of ice was forced up over another sheet, leaving a fine shelter for a camp, a regular ice house with walls six or eight feet thick. We preferred, however, to camp in an igloo up at the point if one could be found.

On reaching the point, we spotted an igloo up on the tundra and made for it. No one came out to greet us, as was usual in that upper country where travelers were scarce, so we thought it was empty. We crawled down the one stick ladder and when our eyes became accustomed to the dark, a sight lay before us. Dead Eskimos—eight of them, of all ages—lay around on the floor of the entrance to the igloo. Investigating further, we found two more back in another room, apparently the last ones to die. The two in the rear evidently had dragged the other eight that far but were too weak to take them out to their burial racks. Three dogs were lying dead, tied to the walls, starved to death. The Eskimos had tied them up to keep them from eating the bodies of the dead, and when the last one died, he left the dogs tied to starve.



University of Washington Photo

Trading companies had some flat scows and a flat-bottom tug to pull in goods and passengers from steamers to shore at Nome, which has no harbor

The epidemic in that district was so thorough that very few Eskimos were left alive. The few who did live moved up or down the coast as soon as they could and left the suffering ones all alone.

That settled it for us around there—no camping in an igloo that night. So we pulled back down to the "ice house" and made camp. The next morning we went past that Eskimo settlement so fast that you couldn't see us for dust. There were plenty of empty igloos along that coast then and, believe me, we examined them well after that, before crawling in to spend the night.

Along here we met two prospectors with their dog team, coming in from the Kotzebue Sound country, heading for Teller. They gave us news of the upper country, which was not very encouraging as far as gold mining was concerned, and they told us that the poor Eskimos up there fared rather badly too during the epidemic. They reported dozens of igloos empty up the coast.

In passing one place, they said, an object near the trail, which looked like a small pile of cordwood with a large canvas over it, attracted their attention. They stopped to investigate and, lifting up one end of the covering, found a lot of dead Eskimos. They had been hauled out by their more fortunate brothers—until there were no more brothers able to do it, and the last one failed and died inside the igloo.

We were getting close to the westerly end of the land now, and thought that the mountains over in Russia could be seen if the weather would permit. Sure enough, the next day was cold and the sky clear. We mushed back over a flat for half a mile and climbed up the side of a mountain for nearly 500 feet. From there we could see the hazy outlines of the mountains in Siberia across the Arctic Channel. With a powerful field glass one could observe the Siberian coast in detail.

While we were straining our eyes looking across the channel Tom said: "Do you see that line out there about 30 miles?"

"What line?" I asked.

"The Admiralty Line—the International Date Line—the line that reaches from the South Pole to the North Pole."

"Oh, yeah!"

"Yes," says Tom, "today here is tomorrow over there and today over there is yesterday on this side. If I should make a flying trip across that channel and return today, I would be over there tomorrow and return from there yesterday."

By that time I gave up.

At this point our journey to the north ended. We were at the most westerly point of the continent, Cape Prince of Wales, later named The Seward Peninsula. Nearby Kotzebue Sound dips away back into the mainland for nearly 200 miles and forms a good sized inland sea. Some 400 miles beyond the Sound is Point Barrow, at the northern tip of Alaska on the Arctic Ocean.

If a line were drawn directly south from this point of Alaska, it would pass just about 1,000 miles west of Honolulu. And a line extended south from the eastern boundary of Alaska would pass a point about 800 miles west of San Francisco, out in the broad Pacific.

We prospected again at this point in the short creeks that run down off the mountain sides, but could locate nothing more than colors of fine gold.

The dog feed was getting low so we had to head for home. Our dog feed consisted of boiled rice and corn meal, flavored with bacon or any kind of meat we could get. That feed, in the dry form, goes farther than any other, and is easily transported. When boiled into a stiff mixture, it is good for man and dog and will stay with them on a hard trail.

Paddling through slush ice with a large whaleskin boat in sub-zero weather is no picnic. However, we got onto the Eskimo village long after dark. Only one night did we stay there this time, and in the early morning pulled out down the coast, arriving in Nome two days before Christmas. Tom's first winter mushing trip was a severe one for a newcomer, but he came through it like an old Sourdough.

The rest of the 1900-01 winter was spent very much as all the previous ones had been—that is, in reading, playing cards, swapping yarns, watching the gambling tables and taking in all the home talent shows that were put on. This went on until the first of April, when things began to stir again.

We got acquainted with four young Negro men who lived in a cabin nearby, where we spent many a pleasant evening. They were all good singers, had a banjo and guitar, and could throw a clog dance with the best of them. The oldest one had been a professional boxer at one time. That boy could sure handle his mitts. We all used to take turns at trying to hit his face, but his guard was so perfect that our blows always bounced off his gloves. Of course, he did not try to hit us. If he had, the scrap would have ended about the first second of the first round.

WAITING FOR SPRING

JUST about every day after we got through with our strenuous amusement, a penny-ante poker game would develop. With a four-bit limit none of us ever lost or won very much, even though the game would last until three or four o'clock in the morning. "Bedtime" does not mean anything up there in the winter, because bedtime is any time from ten o'clock until four the next morning, and even then a fellow can get in an average night's sleep before it is daylight.

They were four nice Negro boys. One of them had a grubstake claim where they all worked at mining steadily all summer and made a fairly good clean up by fall.

When spring came, every miner woke up out of his long winter's sleep or inactivity and began to get things in shape for another summer's grind. My new partner, the ex-Deputy Recorder, and I were also on the move, making ready to open up our wedge fraction claim on the rich Anvil Creek. This wedge was situated between No. 3 and No. 4 above Discovery claim. Claim No. 4 was owned by Lane Mining & Steamship Company of San Francisco and No. 3 by Nome Mining Company. The original discoverers were Lindberg and Lindbloom. We were a thorn between them, of course, when we moved our outfit onto the creek and began operations.

Allowing us to set up our boxes and work our wedge would deprive them of space to dump their tailings, for they could not cover us up without being liable to a court action. So they proceeded to "hog" all the water by throwing up a wing dam to carry it around beyond the point of our wedge. They even put up strings on stakes to designate the boundary lines, so that we could not get over on their claims. However, the edge of the wing dam was very close to our line and the seepage gave us plenty of water.

The pay streak did not start in our claims till the claim had narrowed down to about two feet wide. Our only pay dirt was in the bottom of a ditch two feet wide at one end, running about 20 feet and pinching out to a point, but the last 6 or 8 feet we could not work without getting on their claim, which they were watching very closely. That little piece of pay dirt gave us 30 ounces of gold dust, or about $480. We could have had 5 or 6 ounces more if we could have worked all the wedge because the pay streak, just at that point, was the richest on the creek.

Since we did not want to have trouble with them over that little piece of ground and the pay dirt that was left was not worth a crack on the head with a shovel, we up and pulled out of the creek. At that, we each got a grubstake out of it.

With the summer's activities and the usual winter's social entertainment and an occasional stampede to a newly discovered discovery, the time passed along until the spring of 1902 was in the offing.

Late in the previous summer, the two Smith boys, Jim and Bob, had prospected and staked some claims on a creek 25 miles northwest of Teller, not so far inland from where we three had taken that boat trip up Mary's River. They staked several claims for their friends through their power of attorney so when they came back, they reported that they had some very likely looking property out there and they figured on going out with an outfit to open up their claims just as soon as weather would permit.

Three of us half-claim owners went together to get our outfit up there before the snow was gone in the spring. By the middle of March we were all set to hit the trail again. But let me explain what kind of an outfit we had to travel on a snow trail for about 140 miles.

One of my partners who had been a baker back in the States, had bought a horse the fall before. On account of the excessively high price of hay, $150 a ton, horses were cheap. Flour was quite cheap, too, and that which had been in salt water from shipwrecks had a stiff coating of dough around it, leaving the rest of the flour as good as ever. This could be bought for $1 a 100-pound sack.

"He's pretty good. Says four Mohawks and two Frenchmen went by here an hour ago in a Ford car!"

Our Mr. Baker saw that he could feed a horse quite cheaply on bread, so he built a Dutch oven and baked for his horse all winter. When we were ready for our trip, he came out with a sled load of bread piled up like a load of wood. The trail was packed and we made good time, but at night we were up against a problem. There were no stables along the trail, only at Shay's roadhouse, so we had to hunt along under the bank of the tundra to find a large snowdrift and dig a stable for the poor horse. With a tarpaulin for a door, a stovepipe on top for ventilation, and a blanket on the horse, he was as warm as toast and comfortable after a good feed of loaves of bread.

The snowstorms were still raging, for that was an exceptionally late spring. Each morning we had to dig out about ten feet of snow from the horse's tarpaulin before getting to him. Our caravan of dogs and horse going along the trail was quite a sight for the native Eskimos, as many of them had never seen such an animal. Our trip up to Teller was uneventful except for a forced stop at Shay's roadhouse on account of a blizzard.

At Teller we met the Smith boys who were to show us the way over the hills, across the inner harbor, and to the creek on which they had staked their claims. They already had their camp located. The trail led us across the bay and along the shore for six miles. Then for six more long, long miles we trudged up a winding and steep creek until we reached the summit. On top of the high ridge, the north wind blew a terrific gale at 40 degrees below zero. We had to help the baker put some extra blankets on his horse to keep him from freezing. The dogs were, of course, used to that temperature and did not mind it.

We faced that wind up on the ridge for three miles and were all glad to drop down the other side into more sheltered territory. We soon reached the camp, already prepared for our stay. But before we really settled for the night, we had to build a stable, or rather dig one. There was a convenient snowbank right near the camp and with the experience that we had on the trip up, it did not take us long. Next morning, however, and several mornings after that, we had to dig out about ten feet of snow to get into it.

During these last six or seven weeks that we were penned in, it was hard to find enough to do to keep our minds occupied, as it was impossible to do any mining. To pass the time during the milder days, I used to go down to my claim and try to locate the creek bed by digging down through 10 to 15 feet of snow. I tried digging without any protection against the constantly drifting hard pebbles of snow which kept filling in the hole and falling down my neck, but finally went back to camp and brought down an extra small tent that we had taken along for trail equipment.

Setting that over the hole would stop the drift, I thought, but it didn't. So I built an A-shaped snow fence out of square blocks cut out of the prospect hole, and even that did not last very long. The hard pellets of snow cut the fence away like a sand blast machine, but I kept on digging. The first hole was 15 feet deep to the gravel creek bed. As the hole increased in depth I discovered that very soon I would be down in there with no way to get out if I didn't dig steps on one side. The snow was so hard that it made a substantial stairway. The gravel bottom, too, was frozen as hard as cement. I made no headway in that as there was no wood with which to do any thawing. However, all this work for nothing did not matter any; in fact, it was an interesting pastime and kept one in physical fitness better than sitting around camp doing nothing day after day.

Grotesque art of Alaska Indians

Along in May our wood problem began to grow serious. Up until then we had been gathering in all brush and twigs that were visible above the snow on the hillside, but they petered out. There was plenty of brush down near the center of the creek but it was under 10 to 50 feet of snow. For about three weeks our wood, or rather brush, had to be gathered by following the ground level and tunneling along under a snowbank which was as high as an ordinary house.

Once in a while some of us would take a trip back to Teller to replenish our stock of grub and gather what news there was from Nome, if any. It was about 16 miles so it made a two-day trip. Once on my way in, after having climbed out of the creek bottom and over the divide, instead of walking down the long two-mile slope toward the bay and holding the sled back off my dogs, I unhitched them, hopped on the sled and coasted down, the dogs following. Everything went fine and I had no mishap at all.

On my return to camp, I mentioned to the boys what fun I had coasting down the long slope. About a week after that one of the boys had to go to town, so he tried my stunt of coasting. After I had run the hill, there had been a couple of hard storms which blew in a great deal of snow. The current of air had created an eddy and caused a large hole the size of a house to form right in the middle of the trail which I used. Bud had started as I had, from the top, and was going at a fast clip when he ran into the center of that hole. He struck on the lower side with such force that it knocked him unconscious. It was two hours before he came to. His dogs were waiting around for him to wake up. Managing to get them hitched up, he rode the rest of the way to town. Bud came back to camp again in a few days very badly banged up from that sudden stop.

Spring had to come some time, that was certain, and if we could hold out long enough, we would beat her to it. The days and nights were practically the same now, as it was daylight almost 24 hours. We stood the pounding of the elements up till the 31st day of May. On that day a three-day blizzard blew itself out. By that time our tunnel into the horse stable was over 50 feet long and on June 3 the roof of the stable caved in on account of a warm rain. But old Dobbin had been moved to a tent a few days before and so escaped the collapse of his snow stable.

MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IS CLAIM-JUMPER

ON JUNE 1, the bright sun came out warm and with a chinook wind from the south, it seemed that summer was upon us in all its glory. In three days there was slush everywhere. The creeks took on the booming sound of surging waters in their mad rush to the sea. In a week's time most of the snow had melted except in very deep gullies.

As soon as clear water began to run in the creeks, all hands got busy on their spring washing by hanging their clothes in the creek for a few days. Up in the Klondike country in the spring, it was said, the men made a nice cleanup by panning their overalls and shirts, after leaving them tied in a creek for a week or so! The miners working their claims up the creek above them must have had a leaky sluice box or something. We had no such luck panning our overalls; it was patching we had to do.

When the snow had gone out of our "wood lot," one could see where we had missed nice bunches of brush when we were tunneling around under the snow. We could have saved a lot of snow shoveling had we known which way to go.

We lost no time getting to work for a prospect of our individual claims. The creek was about eight miles long and took in a large territory as a watershed; consequently, we had quite a body of water to contend with at all times.

I had taken surface prospects and found colors, but again that did not mean anything up there, as colors were plentiful. What we all wanted was a bedrock test. If there is any pay dirt, it is on bedrock.

On each claim the owner was striving valiantly to construct a wing dam by rolling big boulders in a line diagonally down and half-way or more across the stream, then filling them up with smaller stones and gravel, sometimes using moss for chinking. Such a dam, well built, will divert nearly all the water off to one side, leaving the other side dry. When completed, we went downstream a short distance and start digging a bedrock drain, gradually deepening the ditch just enough for the water to run down and out. We continued our ditch deeper and deeper until bedrock was reached near the dam. By this method one can prospect on a dry bedrock.

It took each one of us about two weeks to prepare all this, even without any mishaps, but we had to take into account the spring freshets and cloudbursts up near the divide, which would come roaring down the creek without any warning and wipe out all the work that had been done.

I built up three such dams before getting half-way down to bedrock and the other boys up the creek were having their troubles too. The Smith boys got hold of a small steam boiler about the size of a rain barrel and rigged it up with steam hose and points to thaw their way down to bedrock. But getting wood was their big problem. It took two extra men to gather brush fast enough to keep up the five pounds of steam which was required for thawing purposes. They succeeded in sinking several holes but could not locate the pay streak.

One day I was cooking dinner up at the main camp when a stranger came in from up the creek and said he was in a hurry to get back to town and wanted something to eat. I gave him a plate of beans, bread and coffee, then he left. But he did not go up the usual trail. About half an hour after that, in came both of the Smith boys with another man and dug out their six-shooters. I told them I had just fed a stranger who was in a hurry. "That's our man," they said, and set out to overtake him.

This stranger was a claim-jumper. He had just stuck his notices and stakes on several of the boys' claims farther up the creek. The boys had seen a stranger go up over a knoll to avoid them, so they investigated and found his fresh stakes on their claims. They never caught him because he doubled back around a knoll and got several miles ahead of them.

They went to town the next day and posted a notice saying that if that claim-jumper or any one of his friends ever was seen again on their creek, he would be shot. No one ever appeared to lay claim to that property. The Smith boys meant business. It would have been plain suicide for those fellows to show up on the creek again after reading that posted notice.

I moved my few belongings down onto my own claim to be nearer my work. It was daylight now during the 24 hours. One time during my sleeping period I was awakened by a violent shaking of the tent and the roar of tramping feet. Looking out through the tent flaps, I saw myself in the middle of a herd of 1,500 reindeer. I came near being stampeded myself, but when my wits were fully recovered, I decided to stay put where I was. They could not see me in the tent although some of them stumbled over the tent ropes. If I had tried to run out through that herd, most likely some of the bulls would have tossed me for a couple of bases. They were being driven across the hills to other feeding grounds by their herdsmen.

Because the short summer and the floods had materially shortened our time for prospecting or locating a probable pay streak to insure a grubstake for the coming winter, things began to look more serious as fall approached with no pay streak in sight.

Fred Walsh, who owned the claim next to mine, was in very much the same fix as I and had had the same kind of misfortune with floods. After expressing heart to heart sympathy for one another, we decided to abandon the claims for that year and hot-foot it back to Nome to get a winter grubstake on our Dexter Creek claim. On the eighth of August we left the creek with only our bed roll and small packs on our backs, leaving everything else to stand until the following spring, when we intended to return.

On the way in to Teller we had to keep along the shore of the bay which we had crossed on the ice during the winter. We were on the north shore, the one that always received big drifts of snow extending out onto the ice 100 feet or more. The late spring had delayed thawing of those drifts, especially the snow that rested on the land up to the water's edge. There, with the exception of a few places, it had been melted out underneath the drift by action of the water, leaving a ledge of snow suspended.

That stretch of six miles of smooth hard surface to walk on, instead of the rough tundra, seemed to us like a made-to-order highway. Even with an occasional detour of a half-mile or so up around some creek to get across, we made good time on top of this hard icy snow until a funny accident happened.

We were hiking along under normal conditions when Fred saw a ripple in the water nearby. We walked over to the edge of the drift to look over when down we both went on our backs over the slippery ice into the water. Luckily there was a shallow beach with only two feet of water to drop into. The drift had been melted out from away back under and was just hanging onto a small surface of frozen ground. We had a hard time getting back on top again as there was one solid wall of ice for miles except where small creeks came in.

When we got down to the sand spit opposite Teller, the tide was coming in through the channel at a terrific speed. We were compelled to wait on the point for six hours before a boatman on the other side could come across.

The ice in Port Clarence Bay did not break up that summer until the fourth of July. Before that date no steamers could get in.

We caught a small missionary steamer named the *North Star*, which sailed for Nome the next day. It was a short, top-heavy craft, hard to manage in a stiff gale, but we got back to Nome without much excitement on the way. It was reported later in the shipping news in Seattle that this boat had foundered in a storm and was lost in the Bering Sea, near the Aleutian Islands, on her way out to the States that fall.

JAKE'S DUDE RANCH
BLACKSMITH

"O. K.! funnyboy—the *horse* is over here!"

PASSAGE TO DUTCH HARBOR

ARRIVING at Nome, we observed the usual devastation had been distributed along the beach front by summer storms. The destruction of property that summer was not to be compared to that of the two previous years, however. The people were being educated to the peculiar whims of the elements.

Not long after landing we were both busy on the creek getting out a grubstake for the winter. At that time the funds of our particular organization were practically nil. We ran a rocker for six weeks and washed up about 20 ounces of gold ($160 for each). It was freezing quite heavily every night, so we pulled out for town again.

Up to that time miners and others had not been anxious about going out to the States so soon. But when it began to freeze, they began to scan the outer sea for a ship to take them out.

It was then that the great desire came upon us to spend the winter outside rather than endure another winter doing nothing. But there were no ships in sight just then.

A small two-masted fishing schooner lay out in the harbor, but nobody wanted to go out on that. Soon a smoke was seen on the southern horizon but when it developed into a ship, it turned out to be only a revenue cutter bringing in the sad news that there was a strike of steamship machinists on the entire Pacific Coast and there would be no more ships into Nome that fall from the outside.

Fred and I happened to be on the beach when the Captain's boat slid into the sand. The sailors told us about the situation on the outside, which made us even more eager to go. We rushed to our cabin, grabbed a grip with a few clothes in it, and engaged a man to row us out to that windjammer.

Being among the first eight people to arrive at the ship, we got located in the cabin with a real bunk to sleep in. Those who came later had to be content with a berth down in the hold, on temporary makeshift bunks, and with the smell of fish so strong that one was reminded of fish day in a big market.

There were 84 of us passengers aboard. After the voyage was fairly well begun, we found that about 99 per cent of the fellows in the hold did not care whether they were in a feather bed or on a stormy beach so far as comfortable appointments were concerned. The voyage so far had been very rough. Cooped up in the hold of a little sailing ship that bobbed up and down with every swell, they were so seasick that the boat could have sunk and no one would have made any protest. That was true of ourselves, the passengers in the cabin, as well.

This boat was only about 80 feet long. After we got out of sight of land a northeast snowstorm caught us on our port side. We landlubbers could not walk around at all without hanging onto something. Every minute a monster swell would drench the deck from stern to stern. Everything was tied down fast.

A half dozen big oak casks of fresh water were tied fast on deck. One night during a rough sea when two of them broke loose, it sounded to us down in the cabin as though the roof were being torn off. They were being washed from one side to the other, up against the scupper rails with a bang; and everytime they hit, something gave way. The Skipper's voice was heard above all the noise, bawling out orders to the sailors; fore and aft sails were flopping from side to side; the wind was roaring through the rigging. All this was enough to keep us landlubbers hanging onto our bunks, though we were so seasick that it was pleasant to think of funerals and graveyards.

It is 600 miles in a southeasterly direction from Nome to Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands, through the Bering Sea. During the eight stormy days of the voyage down from Nome we had our fun as well as misery. During the heavy storms when the boat was on her beam ends and the time came for meals, we usually had a good laugh. The cook's galley (kitchen) was located up forward on the open deck. The grub cooked there had to be transferred back to the cabin on the rear end, down under a half-deck. The roof of the cabin was flat and four feet higher than the main deck.

A landlubber was working for his passage out as a cook's flunky; he had to carry the food from the galley back to the cabin. He had a basket filled with food and one arm free to hold to the rail. When we were riding a rough sea it was fun to see the flunky trying to navigate up the few steps and over the cabin roof with his basket. Many a time we saw him slip and slide on his back from one side of the deck to the other, all mixed up with his dishes and grub and salt water.

From the deck down into the cabin at the rear, was a stairway of narrow steps; these steps had strips of copper to bind the edges. It took a steady man on a calm sea to go down without slipping; during a storm it was a risky job. The poor flunky had to make those stairs three times a day, storm or no storm, as the crew had to be fed. With us passengers it did not matter as we were not so very hungry, especially during rough weather. Often he had to return to the galley to get his basket refilled because he had slid down those stairs on his back as the ship dived between waves.

We in the cabin ate at the Captain's table. During storms we watched him closely. He could almost smell the big waves in time to grab his plate and coffee cup from the table so that they wouldn't spill, as did ours.

One of the cabin passengers was a big old husky fellow with a booming voice. He defied seasickness by drinking quarts of whiskey. He did not eat anything. He kept everybody amused by his funny remarks and his Swedish dialect.

One morning it was clear and the sun was shining, but there was a heavy sea rolling and each wave carried a feather on its crest. The old man went up to the head of the stairs and stood at the door looking over the rail. He was in the habit of crowing like a rooster when everything looked fine to him. In the midst of one of his boisterous crowings, a wave slapped the ship and threw barrels of water over the rail, catching him square in the face and washing him down the stairs onto the cabin floor. He was none the worse for it, only good and wet.

During one of our quiet meals in the cabin, when we did not have to hang onto our dishes, the conversation drifted from one topic to another until finally we were all listening attentively to the Captain relating his adventures with his small fishing schooner, while poaching in Russian waters along the Siberian coast.

He said he had to keep a sharp lookout for Russian gunboats which were patrolling the coast. Building a false bottom in one end of his schooner, he said, had several times saved him from being arrested as a poacher. Under the false bottom there usually was a small fortune in ivory and furs.

By lowering the trade value of his goods to the Eskimos, the Captain obtained all the ivory and furs they had. The Russian trade goods values to the natives were considerably higher. He said he always had to carry a few tons of dried fish as an excuse for being in Russian waters when a gunboat would overhaul and give him a once-over search. Buying dried fish was permissible.

About halfway down this course from Nome, the Captain said we passed the fur seal islands, the Pribilof group. St. Paul Island contains more fur seals than any other rookery in the world. The U. S. Government supervises all catches made there and sees that only the bulls are killed, to keep the seals from becoming extinct. During those long stormy days we would put on our slickers and sit on deck in the wind and rain for hours at a time, rather than stay below decks and be seasick. The cold fresh air made one feel better.

That first northeast storm had so constantly pounded us from the same side that when the Captain did get a chance to see the sun to get his bearings, he found that we had been forced off our course more than 100 miles, and would wind up among the rocks down on a neck of stony islands that run out into the sea for 800 miles toward Japan.

He immediately changed his course, but before we got very far another storm came on, the same kind that we used to get at Nome and from the same direction, so he headed straight into it by tacking.

On the second evening of this storm just before dark, the Skipper saw rocks ahead. We all saw them. They were immense boulders, the size of a city block, tipped up on edge. Sticking up out of the water, a long line of them, they extended as far as the eye could see. Had it been dark that old ship would have been wrecked right there. She was headed directly toward them.

The Captain realized we were far off our course even yet. The channel that leads up into Unalaska is surrounded by lofty mountains; the scenery along here did not correspond with that at all.

HOMEWARD BOUND

IT WAS getting dark, in a rain storm, with a long line of treacherous looking rocks in view. The Captain headed back toward Nome again. He carried just enough sail to keep steerageway until daylight, then headed east toward Dutch Harbor, not knowing just how far away it was.

We tacked into a headwind all the next day, right parallel to the jagged line of rocks which were about ten miles off, and just before dark sighted a big full-rigged whaling ship bearing down on us from broadside, coming from the north. Our Captain had been watching closely for an opening in the mountains for the harbor channel but could not locate it. When this big sailing vessel cut in behind us and ran straight head on toward shore, it seemed to run into a hole in the bank. That was where the invisible channel was. Our Skipper headed around and followed the whaler into the prettiest little harbor one ever saw. Unalaska (Dutch Harbor, the old name) is situated in a land-locked deep water basin at the end of a regular Norway fjord.

When we tied up at the wharf and were on solid footing again, it was a dizzy bunch one would have seen, walking with sea legs on land after such a stormy voyage.

Unalaska is situated near the center of the Aleutian Islands which constitute the boundary between the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean. On the one side is the cold water of the icy north; on the other, the warm Japan current. On account of cold and warm air coming in contact with each other, this region receives the greatest rainfall of any spot belonging to the U. S.

Freakish wind currents develop suddenly but are of short duration. I remember once walking along a pier out into the harbor when the Captain, some distance ahead of me, suddenly wheeled around and hollered to me to hang onto a post—quick! I did, and it was just in time to keep me from being blown off the pier. A gust of wind had come down from above with the speed of a cyclone and it disappeared just as quickly.

We tramped around the shores of that harbor for three days before setting sail again. During the stay there, all hands tried fishing and I believe we caught a sample of every kind of fish that we knew.

All having recovered from our seasickness, we were anxious to pull out onto the briny deep for 1,700 miles more to reach the good old U.S.A. Setting sail one bright morning we headed back into the Bering Sea along those rocky shores, until we came to a narrow channel that brought us through the mighty Pacific Ocean. Coming through there

Group of native children

we experienced a very decided change in temperature, from a chilly raw wind to a warm summerlike air. The current that we now were sailing in would, in time, reach the islands in the South Seas and Japan.

The trip was uneventful for the first day or so on the big water. But as we got out a few hundred miles, the sea became calmer and the wind dropped until it gradually played out completely. There we were—a sailing ship and no wind. For two days we lay in a calm—we did not move enough to get away from the garbage that the cook threw overboard.

While we were loafing around trying to pass the time, the Captain had a sailor heave the lead to get the depth and found bottom at 300 feet. He got out miles of fish line and persuaded some of us to try deep-sea fishing. Hunks of salt pork were tied on a big bolt for a sinker, then dropped overboard. Down it went, until we couldn't feel whether it was on the bottom or not. After leaving it there for five or ten minutes we would start hauling in the line. The first fish caught was a cod, about a twelve-pounder.

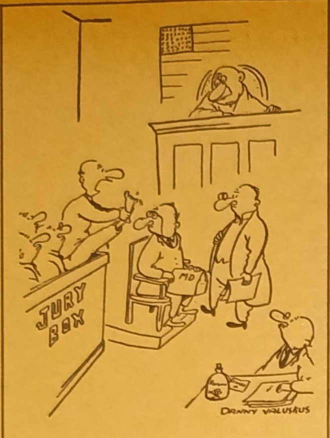
The Captain said that we were right over a cod bank, or a knoll on the sea bottom where the fish hang out. We discovered this fish pond on the last day of the calm, but one day's fishing with that gang supplied us with several good feeds of fresh codfish. It was great fun to watch a man pull in nearly 300 feet of line, then have nothing there. The cod does not fight on the hook and comes up with the heavy bolt, perfectly quiet. Until one sees him on the hook, away down in the clear water, one does not know that he has caught a fish. Sometimes the chunk of pork was mistaken for a shiny white cod and pulled in: the discovery of the mistake produced a laugh among the others.

After two days of perfect calm, a wind sprang up and we were under way. A flock of sea gulls followed us from shore until they met another ship going back; that was about 500 miles out. The ships we met were those that had been tied up by the strike and were heading for Nome to bring out the crowds that were awaiting passage back to the States.

One day we were sailing along in perfect weather when the forward watch shouted, "Derelict ahead!" Of course, everyone on deck spotted it at once. It looked to us like a good-sized boat upside down. The Captain gave orders to steer near to it and cautioned us to make no sound until he gave the signal, then to yell as loud as we could.

The big white sails of our ship were full and we glided noiselessly up to a monster black whale. He lay there asleep in the sun. When the Captain signaled for us to let loose, you should have seen the commotion that whale made when he opened his eyes and saw that ship about to pounce onto him. In his sudden awakening he made all the effort possible to get away and splashed water all over us; but he was soon out of sight in the deep. The Captain said he was a 40-ton whale.

On our trip over this last leg from Unalaska, we had two storms—just enough to bring on some more seasickness. For a day after each storm the sea was so rough that no one cared whether it stormed or not. Then we would enjoy a few days of nice weather again.



"Say, Doc—what makes my little toe grow crooked!"

The warm current makes a sweep up the Pacific Coast and around past Valdez and Copper Center on the southern coast of Alaska. This, by the way, is the reason for the moderate temperature of that Alaska region which has so recently developed into an agricultural district.

About 1,000 miles out from land, about the center of the northern end of the Pacific where we were, there was not much current and we ran into another calm, a three-day siege this time. Not one breath of air was stirring. The sailors would stand at the rail for hours at a time and whistle a long, drawn-out note to bring the wind. They left the sails all set so that the boat would not toss so much when the long swells rolled under her. The cook's kitchen garbage stayed with us just the same, but we had two sea gulls to watch scrambling among it for feed.

After having rolled from side to side a million times, a faint breeze was noticed on the water to the southwest. Soon we began to move and leave the garbage behind. The breeze developed into a trade wind from the direction of the southern seas. Each day the wind increased in velocity. For six days thereafter we plowed through monster seas.

The last two days the wind was like a typhoon. The ship's sails were trimmed down to one piece of canvas ten feet square. Even that sent us fast enough, as the wind was almost straight behind us. Those swells developed into mountains of water and foam with a quarter of a mile between high points. It was like looking down into a large valley. One minute we would be at the bottom, next minute on top. The ship would coast down one side, then climb up the other—coast and climb for three days with a terrific wind urging us on, piling up tons of water on board to wash the length of the deck.

Land was sighted early one morning. The Captain had said that he did not want to be on the sea much longer as this wind meant that a severe storm was approaching. Those who dared venture on deck and were not too sick enjoyed themselves looking at the trees when we were close enough to see them in detail. It had been years since some of us had seen a tree. This wind and extra sea made scenery for us on the rocky cliffs along the shore.

One place that drew everyone's attention was the west side of Vancouver Island, where those big swells were breaking and splashing to the top of the cliff. Pity a ship that ever got into that! Cape Flattery on the other side of the channel was also getting a drenching. As we sailed into the entrance of the Straits of San Juan the swells were so great that it was only when our ship and another, two miles astern, were on the crest of waves, that we could see each other.

After sailing a few miles up the straits, the rough sea lost its kick and we went into calmer water. We had to stop at Port Townsend for quarantine and have the doctor give us the once-over. He said seasickness meant nothing to him and passed us on. We lay there until evening, however, making repairs on sailcloth that had been torn to pieces.

A siege of seasickness for nearly all of our passengers and our inability to eat regular meals during the voyage, prepared our appetites for food when we got our feet on land. Our chief desire was for something different from salt pork, bean soup, hard bread and coffee. My partner suggested that one of us go out and telegraph ahead to Seattle to have $100 worth of ham and eggs ready for breakfast next morning when we arrived.

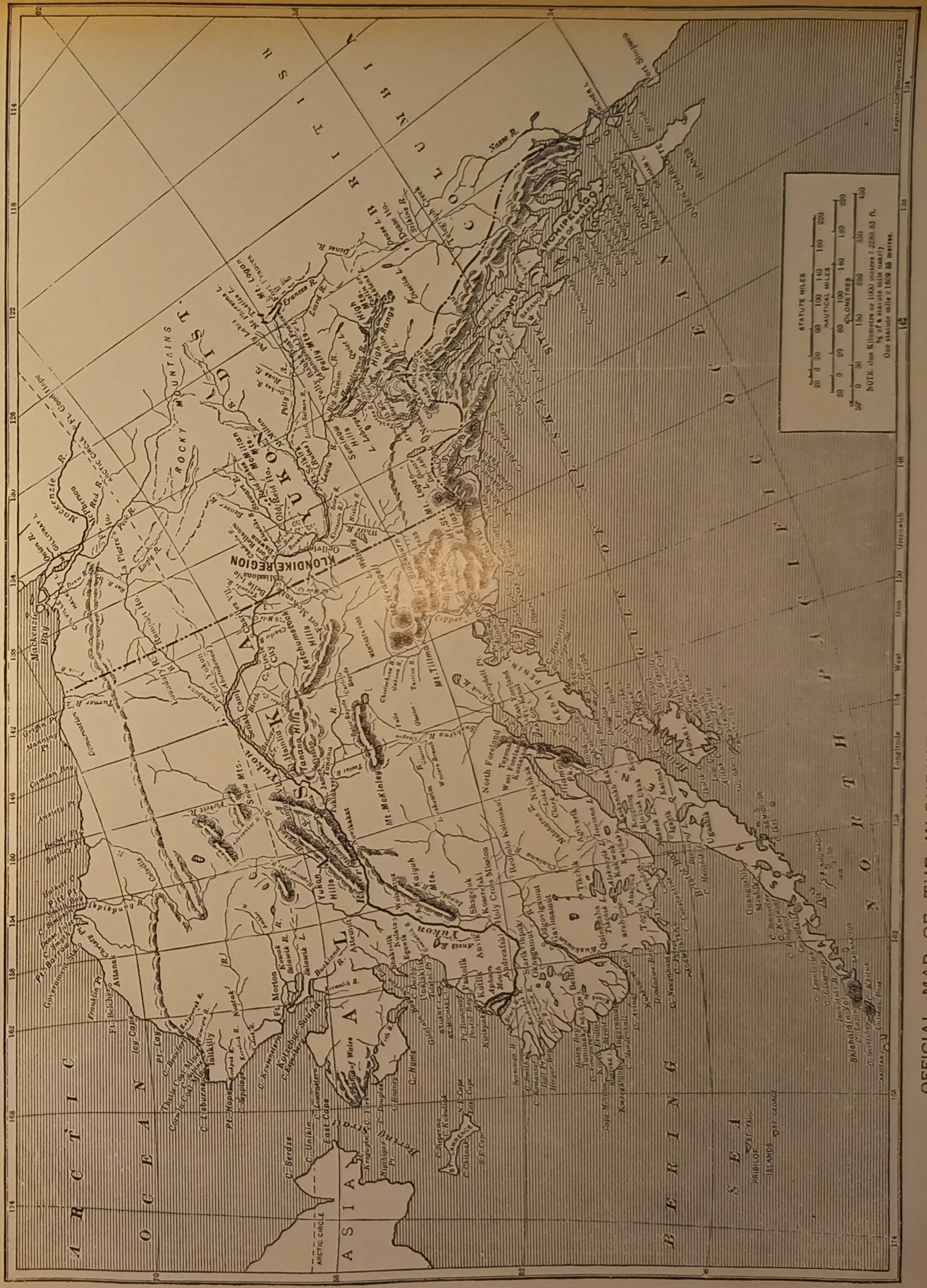
That evening the Captain headed up the sound. Guided only by the headland lights on the sides of a narrow, fjord-like channel, we sailed 80 miles in the pitch-dark night and landed in Seattle at nine o'clock the next morning, November 2, 1902. (I had been 31 days on the trip and seasick 21 days!)

Back in the States, my chief desire was to see the homefolks in the Middle West. After a happy visit with them, a job with the Northern Pacific Railroad as trouble-shooter frequently carried me to the eastern end of the line. When the warm, balmy spring opened up with its profusion of flowers, apple blossoms and sunshine, the desire to remain here so overwhelmed me that, rather than return to bleak and storm-swept Alaska, I decided to cast my lot in an apple orchard "by the waters of Minnetonka" and take what the friendly elements might give. During all the years here the storm gods have not once treated me roughly as in any one year in Alaska.

Several years ago, *National Republic Magazine* in an article by Lucy Salamanca, reported as follows:

"The United States paid Russia $7,200,000 in gold for Alaska. Minerals valued approximately at $600,000,000 have been taken out of that territory, 42 per cent of this coming from the placer gold mining and alluvial deposits. In 100 days in 1906, the city of Nome produced $7,500,000 in gold; the total gold production for 1929 was close to $8,000,000. All years between those dates furnished their quota of wealth in gold dust. The territory has already produced more than a billion and a half dollars in new wealth since its purchase from Russia. And the surface, old-timers tell us, has not been scratched.

"Secretary Seward once was asked what he considered the most important act of his public career, and he replied, 'The purchase of Alaska; but it will take the people a generation to find it out.'"



OFFICIAL MAP OF THE KLONDIKE AND YUKON REGION.

(United States Survey.)

Here is your front cover without print for framing purposes